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ABSTRACT

The Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review (CBSPR) is an essential part of the New Jersey public school evaluation and improvement process. This group of handbooks describes a process for analyzing existing school programs and practices in relation to those factors which have been identified through research to be associated with successful achievement in basic skills. Districts have the responsibility to use the results of the CBSPR to develop and implement basic skills improvement plans which appropriately fit their needs and resources. A school is selected to undergo a CBSPR if: (1) less than 65 percent of its students have met the statewide minimum standards on the Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) test in either reading, computation, or both; (2) there has not been a significantly increasing trend in the percent of students meeting the statewide standard; or (3) acceptable other evidence of pupil achievement has not been submitted by the district. Four groups involved in the CBSPR include the comprehensive review team, the local review team, the county office, and the school administrators and staff. The CBSPR handbooks deal specifically with each group's role and responsibilities, and provide guidelines for implementation at elementary and secondary levels. (RL)

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COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

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SUMMER, 1980

OVERVIEW

COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

OVERVIEW

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Commissioner of Education

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Prepared under the direction of
Office of the Commissioner and
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New Jersey State Department of Education
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Summer, 1980

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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

"The goal of a thorough and efficient system of free public schools shall be to provide to all children in New Jersey, regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic location, the educational opportunity which will prepare them to function politically, economically and socially in a democratic society." (N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-4) It is my firm conviction that all children, with the possible exception of those with severe disabilities, can acquire these basic skills and leave school prepared to cope with the demands of adulthood. I believe this is a feasible goal even though we are far from achieving it at present. This goal is the motivation behind our continuing efforts to improve educational practice and ensure equal opportunity for all children.

As educators it is essential that we not lose sight of this goal, or be deterred by convenient arguments that factors beyond our control largely determine what and how much children learn. While some social scientists, unfortunately, have succeeded in persuading much of the public and many in the educational profession that schools cannot make a significant difference in the lives of children, there is a growing body of research that supports the contention that good schools can and do make a difference. We must make effective use of this knowledge about effective schools in our efforts to improve education in New Jersey.

The educational needs identified through the comprehensive basic skills program review described in this document are not just a local responsibility. The "Thorough and Efficient" legislation has mandated a state and local partnership to improve education. It is the role of the state to bring local

educators and citizens together to assist them in addressing their local educational goals and solving educational problems. In support of these local initiatives, the state must focus its own resources on the schools and districts with the most serious needs. When patterns of need are identified which cannot be resolved with existing resources, it is the responsibility of my office to bring these issues to the attention of the governor and legislature and to seek appropriate remedies.

Although the state and local districts share responsibility for this undertaking, successful efforts at educational improvement depend upon the commitment, leadership and energies of educators and citizens at the school and district level. The best solutions to local educational problems are usually those invented or adopted by the people closest to the situation. To assist such local efforts, the state has developed the comprehensive basic skills program review process. Ultimately, the local staff will implement any improvements in educational services and the degree of their success will depend upon their skill and the willingness of the public to support their efforts.

We all must work together to improve the educational opportunities open to our children. Only through understanding and cooperation will we realize the full benefits of this effort, and thereby move closer to our goal of preparing each youngster for adulthood.

Fred G. Burke
Commissioner

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The comprehensive review committee consisted of staff from the New Jersey State Department of Education (central and county offices), EIC-South and Research for Better Schools. The New Jersey Association of Secondary School Principals and Supervisors provided input concerning the high school review process.

Special thanks go to the many local educators who served on the pilot teams and to the staffs of Logan Township Public Schools, Paterson Public Schools, Elizabeth Public Schools, Perth Amboy Public Schools and Pleasantville Public Schools for their participation in field testing the process.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>Page</u>
Message from the Commissioner of Education.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	iii
I. Purpose of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Review Program.....	1
II. Schools Receiving a Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review.	2
III. The Comprehensive Review Process.....	2
IV. Group Roles and Responsibilities.....	3
The Comprehensive Review Team.....	4
The Local Review Team.....	6
The County Office and the School Program Coordinator.....	7
The School Administrators and Staff.....	8
V. Guidelines for the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review..	9
Development of Guidelines.....	9
District Policies and School Management Practices.....	11
Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations.....	12
The Basic Skills Program.....	13
Instructional Time.....	14
Parent/Community Relations.....	15
VI. Conducting the School Visit.....	15
VII. Comprehensive Review Team Findings and their Implications for Remediation.....	18
VIII. Technical Assistance Available.....	19
Appendix-Schedule of Significant Dates Related to the..... Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process	19
Bibliography.....	21

I. Purpose of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review

The comprehensive basic skills program review process is an essential part of the school evaluation, classification and improvement process. It is a process which brings together a team of educators to compare local basic skills programs against a set of standards derived from studies of effective schools.

The purpose of the comprehensive basic skills program review is twofold. First, it will provide a detailed diagnosis of problems related to achievement in basic skills. Second, the review will contain recommendations to assist the district and school in the development of a basic skills improvement plan.

A comprehensive basic skills program review is designed to analyze the existing school program and practices in relation to those factors which have been identified through research to be associated with successful achievement in basic skills. Research has shown that no single factor is associated with successful education; rather, it is a network of interlocking components. These factors include district policies and school management practices, staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations, basic skills program, instructional time, and parent/community relations. Therefore, the review team will take a broad look at school practices and not just at the formal basic skills program.

Through this structured review process, the New Jersey State Department of Education plans to provide districts with recommendations that have a high probability of leading to improvement in basic skills. It is the district's responsibility, however, to develop and implement a basic skills improvement plan which appropriately fits its needs and resources.

Classification of schools with deficiencies in the area of basic skills is based on the basic skills improvement, or remedial, plan submitted by the district and not on the comprehensive review team report.

II. Schools Receiving a Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review

A school will undergo a comprehensive basic skills program review if:

- . less than 65 percent of its students have met the statewide minimum standards on the Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) test in either reading or computation, or both, during the school year period from 1978 to 80; and
- . there has not been a significantly increasing trend in the percent of students meeting the statewide standard from 1978 to 1980; and
- . acceptable other evidence of pupil achievement has not been submitted by the district.

In 1980, reviews scheduled by the State Department of Education will be conducted from September 15 to December 1. Other schools may wish to use the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Guidelines to conduct self studies. Guidelines and implementation manuals will be made available to all districts in the state through the department.

III. The Comprehensive Review Process

Should a comprehensive basic skills program review be indicated, the county superintendent will select an external review team, the comprehensive review team, usually consisting of five members, including teachers and administrators. Members will be selected for their knowledge of schools and of basic skills, and will undergo a thorough training process prior to their school visitation.

Each school will be asked to appoint a local review team consisting of administrators, teachers and parents. The local review team will work directly with the external team to provide initial information concerning the areas to be analyzed.

Dates for the visit, and efficient time schedule will be arranged by the county superintendent's office in consultation with the principal. The county office will also assemble necessary school and district material with the assistance of both the school staff and the local review team. An explanation of the review process will be the responsibility of the county superintendent's office.

The comprehensive review team will spend approximately three days at the school interviewing staff, reviewing policies and materials, and observing educational practices. At the end of these three days, the team will assemble their findings and present orally its conclusions and recommendations to the local review team and to the school staff. Ten days later, the team's written report will be submitted to the district.

IV. Group Roles and Responsibilities

Four specific groups are involved in the comprehensive basic skills program review process. These groups include: (1) the comprehensive review team; (2) the local review team; (3) the county office; and (4) the school administrators and staff. A brief description of the roles and responsibilities of each group is provided below. A more detailed analysis of each group's role and responsibilities can be found in the handbooks specifically designated for each group.

The Comprehensive Review Team (CRT)

Comprehensive review team members are selected by the county superintendent for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive basic skills program review. This review will result in a list of recommendations which the local school may utilize in developing its remedial plan. A team will usually consist of five members, including a team leader, and will be typically composed of specialists (reading and math), a school administrator, an educational leader, and a parent representative and/or board member. An effort is made to relate team membership to the characteristics of the community that is being evaluated. For example, where a community has a large Hispanic population, the team membership should reflect this demographic fact and include members knowledgeable in the field of Hispanic educational affairs. General considerations for CRT selection are:

- . relevant professional experience
- . a record of association with successful practices
- . knowledge of New Jersey public schools
- . ability to review programs based on the department Guidelines and not on personal bias
- . interpersonal skills
- . communication skills

The team will be trained by the department in the review process.

Training will include:

- . an overview of the research related to effective schools
- . data gathering procedures
- . use of the comprehensive basic skills program review Guidelines and related reporting forms
- . scheduling and organizing the school visit

The factors to be reviewed by the team have been selected because research has identified them as related to school effectiveness in basic skills. The factors are grouped in the following areas: (1) district policies and school management practices; (2) staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations; (3) basic skills program; (4) instructional time; and (5) parent/community relations. The factors will be discussed in more detail later in this overview.

In addition to the training program, CRT members will be provided with informational materials pertinent to the comprehensive basic skills program review process, the guidelines for reviewing basic skills programs, and a set of school district data profiles. This background information should be read prior to the training session. During the actual visit the CRT is responsible for:

- . collecting information by reviewing written records, by interviewing, and through observation procedures
- . analyzing this information in relation to the research factors delineated in the Guidelines
- . drawing conclusions, verifying the existence of an educational problem in the district and explaining the nature of the problem
- . making recommendations to assist the school in developing its remedial plan
- . presenting its findings, conclusions and recommendations in oral exit conferences with the local review team and with the school administration and staff
- . preparing a written report of the school visit.

The Local Review Team (LRT)

The local review team is selected by the district to work with the comprehensive review team and to assist the school in developing the written remedial plan. The 5-10 members should consist of:

- . principal or vice principal
- . specialists (i.e., reading, math, guidance)
- . teachers
- . supervisors
- . parent/community representatives, board members and students (where appropriate)

The following chart shows the relationship between the local review team, the comprehensive review team, and the areas of program review:

<u>LRT</u> (10 people)	<u>CRT</u> (5 people)	<u>Assigned Areas of Program Review</u> (5 areas)
Principal & Vice Principal	Team Leader	District Policies & School Management Practices
Supervisor & Teacher	School Administrator	Staff Knowledge, Attitudes & Expectations
Reading Specialist & Teacher	Reading Specialist	Basic Skills Program (Reading) Instructional Time (Reading)
Mathematics Specialist & Teacher	Mathematics Specialist	Basic Skills Program (Math) Instructional Time (Math)
Parent/Community Representative, Board Member, & Student (where appropriate)	Parent/Community Representative or Board Member	Parent/Community Relations

The LRT is responsible for:

- . reading the comprehensive basic skills program review materials in advance of the site visit
- . providing preliminary information to the CRT
- . participating in a discussion of the CRT's findings
- . assisting the school district in translating the CRT's recommendations into a remedial plan

The County Office and the School Program Coordinator

The county office is the prime orchestrator and arranger of the comprehensive review process, and the county office's representative during the review process is the school program coordinator. This person, working in concert with the district superintendent and school principal, has responsibilities ranging from initiating the review process to disseminating the review team's final report. The school program coordinator is intimately involved in the initiation of the planning, and in the implementation phase of the comprehensive review process.

In the initiation stages, the school program coordinator participates in the review of the Minimum Basic Skills test data and other supporting information in order to determine whether a comprehensive basic skills program review is required. Should a review be indicated, the school program coordinator:

- . meets with the principal or district superintendent
- . arranges the dates of the visit to outline the comprehensive review process
- . prepares for the visit.

Further, the coordinator, with the county superintendent, has the responsibility for identifying and structuring a comprehensive review team whose members will be compatible with the district and with each other. Before the visit occurs, the coordinator will participate in an orientation program for comprehensive review team members. Concurrently, he/she will assist the local review team, the principal and other district staff in the preparation of a district/school information packet and ensure that this packet is distributed to CRT members before the visit.

During the actual visitation the school program coordinator acts as a facilitator, ensuring the free flow of communications between the CRT members and representatives of the district, including LRT members. In addition, the coordinator ensures that team members focus on the research factors in their data gathering and helps to solve any problems that may arise. As the CRT drafts its final report, the coordinator will provide any necessary technical assistance. Finally, the school program coordinator is responsible for assuring that the CRT's final report is complete, typed and delivered to the district, state department central staff and the county office. The comprehensive basic skills program review materials and data will be maintained by the county office for future reference.

The School Administrators and Staff

School improvement is a building level phenomenon and the principal is the key to the successful preparation for and execution of the CRT visit. Responsibilities of the principal before and during the review include:

- . meeting with the school program coordinator to learn about the comprehensive basic skills program review process and to schedule the visit

- . participating in the selection of the local review team
- . meeting with the LRT and with school staff in order to explain the comprehensive basic skills program review process and enlist their support
- . scheduling conference and workroom space for the comprehensive review team
- . arranging for lunches at the school for CRT members
- . making staff available in accordance with the CRT's schedule of interviews and observations
- . providing relevant school data for CRT members
- . participating in a discussion of the results of the comprehensive program review
- . organizing a staff meeting for a presentation of the CRT's recommendations.

The school staff is also most important during the CRT visit. The school staff is responsible for assembling relevant data about the school and the students and for meeting and talking with the CRT members. Lastly, the staff will meet with the CRT to hear the its analyses and recommendations.

V. Guidelines for the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review

The factors used in the guidelines for the comprehensive review teams were derived from research showing relationships between the alterable aspects of a school's program and student performance in the basic skills. Literally, hundreds of research studies describing dozens of different factors have been reported in the research literature. Synthesizing these studies for use in this process was difficult because researchers use different labels to describe the same (or very similar) factors. Moreover, the research results

in some areas are contradictory or inconclusive. The materials, therefore, include only those factors and variables reported in the literature for which there appears to be consistent support. A bibliography of the research literature that was used to determine the factors can be found in the appendix.

In addition to research, the educational utility of the factors was considered in the selection process. That is, a second major criterion for including a factor was the utility of the concept for helping schools improve their educational programs. Educational utility is defined as consisting of three essential features: (1) reviewers and educators in the local school situation can understand the description of the factor and relate it to an aspect of the local educational program; (2) can analyze programs in terms of the factor and suggest possible avenues for improvement; and (3) such improvements should logically lead to increased student performance in the basic skills. Five pilot tests in local districts were conducted to ensure the educational utility of these factors and their associated indicators.

The comprehensive basic skills program review process involves the examination of these factors in a school through interviews with school staff, parents and students and through an analysis of relevant documents. The judgment of the reviewer obviously plays an important role in the review process. The process is designed to focus the reviewer's attention on specific aspects of the school's program that may need to be improved in order to increase student performance in the basic skills. The reviewer decides which methods to use to collect relevant information and uses professional judgment in reaching conclusions and making recommendations.

In the final analysis, considerable care should be taken to avoid over-emphasis on the importance of any single weakness discovered in the school's

program. Even schools with superior basic skills programs may find room for improvement in one area or another. Furthermore, a piecemeal effort to strengthen a particular problem area may have little or no effect on student learning. Significant improvements are more likely to result from a school-wide effort to strengthen the educational program in a number of areas.

The factors which have been identified as affecting student learning in basic skills are:

A. District Policies and School Management Practices

1. Basic Skills Policies - The district has well-defined policies in basic skills, the school has clearly stated improvement objectives, and there is evidence of school-wide commitment to improving basic skills instruction.
2. Discipline Policies - There is a minimal amount of disruption in the school. The school has a conduct code approved by the board of education with clear standards for behavior; it is communicated to all members of the school community; it is enforced by the school staff, and it is viewed as fair and consistently applied in all cases.
3. Staff Development Procedures - The school administration has a strong commitment to improving the skills of staff; staff development programs are planned and conducted in collaboration with the teaching staff, and inservice training programs are evaluated and revised over time.

4. Decision-Making Procedures - The school has established procedures for decision-making with reference to basic skills instruction (e.g., curriculum planning committees).

B. Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations

1. Teacher Knowledge of Instructional Content - The staff is knowledgeable about the structure and substance of the reading and mathematics content it is responsible for teaching.
2. Staff Attitudes Toward the Basic Skills Program - The staff agrees with the overall priority placed on basic skills instruction, the goals of the program and the content and methods used.
3. Principals' Attitudes Toward their Role - The principal places high priority on the role of instructional leadership and plays an active professional role in the basic skills programs of the school.
4. Staff Expectations About Student Learning - The administrators and teachers believe all students are capable of acquiring the basic skills, avoid the use of negative labels for students and use positive techniques (e.g., rewards and praise) to motivate students to learn.

C. The Basic Skills Program

1. The Reading and Mathematics Instructional Program

The planned and classroom implemented curriculum includes the following aligned and interrelated elements:

- . Expected outcomes - Sequenced skills arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels and are related to the standardized tests used in the district.
- . Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- . Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- . Record-keeping system - The student record-keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. Within a district where there is high mobility of students, the system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school.

2. Instructional management includes:

- . classroom teacher-managed instruction
- . strong direct leadership by teachers
- . flexible grouping of students based on assessed learner needs
- . positive methods of control
- . in-class compensatory education
- . lack of classroom disruption.

D. Instructional Time

1. Time in Basic Skills Instruction - The school allocates sufficient instructional time to the teaching of reading and mathematics. Student and teacher attendance provides for maximum basic skills instruction.
2. Classroom Instructional Time - Teachers apply effective strategies for organizing and managing the learning environment for the teaching of reading and mathematics.
3. Student Engaged Time - In reading and mathematics instruction, students spend a high proportion of their scheduled time actively engaged in academic work.

E. Parent/Community Relations

1. Parent/Community Relations and the Basic Skills Program - The school communicates with parents and community members about the basic skills program (e.g., student expectations, content of instruction, evaluation, reporting system) and, in addition, encourages parents to communicate with the school and become involved with their child's instructional program.
2. Parent/Community Relations and the Non-Instructional Processes
The administration and teachers communicate with the parents and community regarding school policies and practices and they encourage active participation of parents for the purpose of providing a safe, pleasant and effective learning environment. Parents are supportive of the school program.

VI. Conducting the School Visit

A school visit is normally scheduled for a three-day time period since pilot tests of this process suggest that three full days are needed to collect the information, analyze the data, and write the final report. Perhaps the most important consideration in assuring an effective visit is the preparation of a "tight" schedule of activities and serious efforts to complete all of the activities within the designated time periods.

A preliminary schedule for the visit will be prepared by the CRT in consultation with the school program coordinator and the school principal.

The schedule will vary from one school to another for a variety of practical reasons (e.g., administrators and staff will be available for interviews at different times, the scheduled activities in each school during the visit will require different types of arrangements). However, the main activities to be conducted by each CRT will be consistent from one school to another. A sample schedule of team activities is as follows:

Sample Schedule for Team Visit

FIRST DAY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
8:00 a.m.	CRT and county school program coordinator meet at the school to review schedule and other plans for visit.	Library
8:30 a.m.	Team leader directs a group interview with principal and superintendent about district policies, school management practices and school and district organization.	Library
10:00 a.m.	Principal conducts tour of school facility.	Library
10:30 a.m.	Each CRT member interviews LRT members to collect preliminary information in assigned areas.	Various Locations
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	CRT members continue to collect preliminary information from school staff through interviews, classroom observations, or other methods.	Various Locations
2:30 p.m.	CRT members meet to discuss preliminary findings and further data collection activities.	Library

SECOND DAY

8:00 a.m.	CRT members meet to coordinate data collection activities during the day.	Library
8:30 a.m.	A schedule for each CRT member's activities is prepared in consultation with the school principal.	Library
9:00 a.m.	CRT members collect additional information in each area to verify data already collected and to explore preliminary findings.	Various Locations
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Individual data collection activities.	Various Locations
2:30 p.m.	CRT members write tentative conclusions and recommendations in their assigned areas.	Library

THIRD DAY

8:00 a.m.	CRT members discuss their conclusions and recommendations, and outline the team report.	Library
10:30 a.m.	CRT members write their final reports. CRT leader writes the overall team report.	Library
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	CRT meets to review final reports and prepare oral presentation.	Library
2:00 p.m.	CRT leader and members orally present final report to LRT.	Library
3:00 p.m.	CRT leader and team members orally present final report to entire school staff.	Auditorium

VII. Comprehensive Basic Skills Program

Comprehensive Review Team Recommendations and their Implications for
Remediation

A final report will be sent to the district by the county superintendent within ten days of the visit. The report will identify strengths and weaknesses of the existing program and practices and will organize these findings according to the topics delineated in the Guidelines. Finally the CRT will make a series of recommendations for improvement in priority order.

The district itself is not obliged to follow all of the recommendations of the CRT in preparing a plan. However, any alternate strategies proposed by the district must be supported by a strong rationale, indicating how the proposed strategies will lead to improvement in basic skills achievement and explaining why particular recommendations were not incorporated into the plan.

All in all, the comprehensive basic skills program review process is a force for change. Although the state plays a significant role in this enterprise, further efforts at educational improvement will require the commitment, leadership and energies of educators and citizens at the school and district levels. The best solutions to local educational problems are those invented or adopted by the people closest to the situation. Ultimately improvements will be made by local individuals, and the degree of success achieved will depend on their skill and effort.

VIII. Technical Assistance Available

Although it will be incumbent upon the local districts and schools to develop and implement remedial plans, these local agencies can request help from other agencies. Such assistance can come from outside as well as inside the district. External resources available will include state and federal government funds as well as technical assistance from the department, Educational Improvement Centers, and public and private institutions of higher education. Internal assistance can come from the community, the school administration and staff, and the local review team. Thus local districts should have considerable support as they work to develop and implement their remedial plans based on the comprehensive basic skills program review.

APPENDIX

Schedule of Significant Dates Related to the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process

June 1, 1980	The department will provide MBS test data to local school districts.
July 15, 1980	Trend data for the MBS test will be provided by the department to the county offices for distribution to districts. The county superintendent will notify districts concerning schools subject to a comprehensive basic skills program review. Districts will be given until August 15 to submit evidence to rebut this analysis.

August 15, 1980 Rebuttal information due in county offices.

August 20, 1980 Comprehensive review teams selected and notified.

August 31, 1980 The commissioner will notify each chief school administrator and board president of the recommended classifications for their district and the schools therein and whether remedial plans are required.

September 15, 1980 Comprehensive basic skills program reviews will begin in identified schools.

December 1, 1980 All comprehensive basic skills program review will be completed.

January 15, 1981 In response to recommendations of comprehensive review team reports, and local assessment and planning activities, districts will submit remedial plans due on this date. Upon review and approval of the basic skills remedial plan, districts and schools will be classified and granted interim approval by the commissioner who will advise the state board of his actions.

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COMPREHENSIVE
BASIC SKILLS
PROGRAM REVIEW

SUMMER, 1980

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RELATED
TO SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

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TO SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

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Commissioner of Education

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Summer, 1980

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Acknowledgements.	i
Introduction.	1
District Policies and School Management Practices.	1
Staff, Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations.	3
Basic Skills Program.	5
Instructional Time.	8
Parent/Community Relations.	9
Bibliography.	13

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INTRODUCTION

This document provides the reader with a synthesis of the research identifying factors that contribute to the improvement of basic skills programs. These factors are derived from research results showing relationships between alterable aspect of a school's program and student performance in the basic skills. It consolidates information that is presented in more detail in the document entitled Guidelines For Reviewing Basic Skills Programs.

Educational research has undergone a major revolution in the past decade. The new research focus represents a shift from studying what has been termed stable or static variables (e.g., socioeconomic status which includes parent education, occupation, and income) to examining variables that are alterable either before the teaching and learning processes or as part of these processes (e.g., encouragement of the child to learn and the ways in which time is utilized in the instructional program).

The preparation of this synthesis involved an analysis of hundreds of research studies. Ninety-one studies are cited in the document. The factors identified in this research review are organized into five groups: (1) district policies and school management practices; (2) staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations; (3) basic skills program; (4) instructional time; and (5) parent/community relations.

Research has shown that no single factor or group of factors is associated with effective education; rather, effective education is the result of an integrated set of practices in all of the areas cited above. Therefore, educators involved in school improvement efforts should take a broad look at school practices and not just at the formal basic skills program.

This document is the first attempt by the New Jersey Department of Education to structure existing knowledge in the highly complex area of school effects. It is expected that this synthesis of research will be revised over the coming years to reflect the results of new research findings as well as the experiences of educators and researchers who conduct field work in school settings.

District Policies and School Management Practices

A substantial body of research indicates that school policies and practices can influence student performance in the basic skills. Rutter, et al. (1979), for example, argue that the school staff can develop an environment where the norms and values of the school are communicated through clear and consistent expectations and appropriate models with feedback. These norms and values may in turn be translated into more formal statements of school policies and practices that influence student achievement. Some of the building climate or environmental factors that the researchers found are important in influencing student achievement are: academic emphasis, rewards and praise, discipline and punishment, staff organization, and student/teacher out-of-class interaction.

Similar results were reported by other researchers with reference to specific policies and procedures in the larger school environment. Brookover and Lezotte (1976) found that schools may impact student achievement by fostering a school-wide emphasis on the basic skills. They believe the school needs to have clearly stated improvement objectives in the basic skills which are understood and applied by the school staff. Moreover, their research suggests that all teachers in the school need to assume some responsibility for teaching the basic reading and math skills. Other researchers who reach similar conclusions include Carroll and Chall (1975), Holzman and Boes (1973) and Wilder (1977).

The importance of discipline policies and procedures is cited by a number of researchers (Kounin, 1977; Soar, 1973; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Coker, Loving and Coher, 1974; Bidwell, 1973; Evertson and Brophy, 1973; Moos, 1979). The general argument here is that it is possible to influence student achievement by fostering classroom environments that are organized and operated with a minimum amount of distraction, disruption, and confusion. To insure controlled classroom environments, discipline policies and procedures are needed which include clear specifications of expectations, standards for evaluating student behavior that are viewed as fair, and a consistent application of all rules for dealing with infractions.

Another factor that has received considerable attention in the research literature is school policies and procedures with reference to staff development. Schools can develop and implement staff training programs which address teacher needs and thereby impart skills that eventually influence student learning. Successful staff development appears to be influenced by the following factors: teachers are included in planning programs; demonstration, practice and feedback of concrete skills are emphasized; teachers play active roles in the training program; the training program is an active part of a continuous problem-solving or school improvement process; staff development is accompanied by on-going staff support from resource personnel; and, training is conducted during school time and at school expense. Support for the above assertions can be found in the work of Lawrence (1974), Ainsworth (1976), McLaughlin (1978), Lessor and Olson (1977) and Tolbert (1978).

The decision-making policies and patterns in a school setting can also affect student learning (Rutter, et al., 1979). The factors that appear significant in this case are: the decision-making patterns with reference to the basic skills instructional program, the extent to which decision-making in this area is centralized or shared, and the degree to which decisions are made in a structured manner. Some indications of effective decision-making patterns in the school might be: planning committees exist; a problem-solving orientation is taken toward decision-making; information about decisions is widely disseminated; and feedback on decisions is sought and used in future decision-making. Additional research to support these findings is cited by Benz (1975), Scott (1977) and in Putting Knowledge to Use (1976).

Summary of Variables

- A. Basic Skills Policies - The district has well defined policies in basic skills, the school has clearly stated improvement objectives* and school-wide commitment to improving basic skills instruction.
- B. Discipline Policies - There is a minimal amount of description in the school. The school has a discipline code approved by the board of education with clear standards for behavior; it is communicated to all members of the school community; it is enforced by the school staff; and, it is viewed as fair and consistently applied in all cases.
- C. Staff Development Policies - The school administration has a strong commitment to improving the skills of the staff; staff development programs are planned and conducted in collaboration with the teaching staff; and, in-service training programs are evaluated and revised over time.
- D. Decision-Making Policies - The school has formulated procedures for decision-making with reference to basic skills instruction; decision-making structures are established within the school (e.g., curriculum planning committees).

Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations

Researchers and educators have reasoned that what the school staff knows or feels or thinks may affect to some degree student learning of the basic skills. Centra and Potter (1977), however, point out that staff characteristics do not affect student learning directly. Knowledge, feelings or understandings tend to influence staff behavior which, in turn, may affect student learning of the basics. Thus, for example, knowledge of reading content and teaching techniques may influence a teacher's behavior in structuring the instructional program. In this sense, staff characteristics may have an indirect, but, nevertheless, important effect on student learning.

A variety of alterable staff characteristics of this kind has been identified by researchers as important contributors to student learning. A teacher's knowledge of the content area he or she is responsible for teaching is one factor. The rationale is that the teacher who knows reading or math content is better able to teach it to students (Bidwell and Kasarda, 1975; Goodman, 1959; Hanushek, 1970). Further evidence of the importance of teacher knowledge of content area comes from a study comparing high and low performing schools (Delaware Department of Public Instruction, 1977). A salient characteristic of the teachers in high performing schools is their knowledge of the structure and substance of the subject being taught.

*A distinction is made in this document between improvement objectives and instructional objectives. The improvement objectives referred to here are a school-wide set of objectives which define the desired improvement of the student body over a given period of time (e.g., the number of sixth grade students achieving the minimum standards on the MBS test will increase by 15% by 1981). Instructional objectives (discussed in another section) refer to a hierarchy of objectives in specific skill areas. These objectives guide daily instruction for individual students in the classroom.

The teacher's attitudes toward the nature and quality of the basic skills instructional program are another factor that may influence student learning. This factor might be defined as the extent of teacher agreement with the overall basic skills philosophy of the school, the goals of instruction, the instructional content and methods, and the measures of achievement. In effect, the underlying rationale is that student learning may be enhanced if the teacher's attitudes are positive toward the school's instructional policies and program requirements. Research supporting this factor is reported by the Delaware Department of Public Instruction (1977).

Teacher expectations about student learning are another characteristic that has received considerable attention in the research literature (Brophy and Good, 1972; Pigeon, 1970; Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968). The theory is that the teacher's expectations about student abilities to learn may affect the teacher's behavior in the classroom. As an example, teachers may direct most of their attention and provide most rewards to students they believe are fast learners (Rist, 1973). The research generally suggests that student learning will be enhanced if teachers assume all students are capable of mastering the basic skills instruction provided in the school. A related point is that teachers in high performing schools tend to avoid negative labeling of students and use positive rather than negative techniques to motivate students to learn (Medley, 1978; Harris and Serwer, 1966; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974).

The principal is typically a dominant force in the school environment, and his/her role in influencing student learning has captured the interest of researchers. Chester, et al. (1975) identify two different roles a principal might play: (a) an administrative role designed to achieve a smoothly running organization, and (b) a professional role concerned with improving classroom processes, encouraging teacher growth, and continually evaluating pupil learning. The professionally-oriented principal expresses more concern about instruction than administration, communicates views about instruction, assumes responsibility for instructional decisions, coordinates instructional programs, emphasizes academic standards, meets regularly with teachers to discuss classroom activities, acts as a disciplinarian, rates staff highly, and has positive perceptions of personal rapport with teachers, parents, and pupils. (Key, 1972; Wellisch, MacQueen, Carriere & Duck, 1978; Weber, 1971; State of New York, 1974; Edmonds, 1978; Brookover and Lezotte, 1977; Austin, 1979; Irvine, 1979). In short, all the above research indicates that professionally-oriented principals are more effective in increasing student achievement than principals who have other priorities, attitudes, and values.

Summary of Variables

- A. Teacher Knowledge of Instructional Content - The staff is knowledgeable about the structure and substance of the reading and math content they are responsible for teaching.
- B. Staff Attitudes Toward the Basic Skills Program - The staff agrees with the overall priority placed on basic skills instruction, the goals of the program, and the content and methods used.

- C. Principals' Attitudes Toward their Role - The principal places high priority on the role of instructional leadership and plays an active professional role in the basic skills program of the school.
- D. Staff Expectations About Student Learning - The administrators and teachers believe all students are capable of acquiring the basic skills, avoid the use of negative labels for students, and use positive techniques (e.g., rewards and praise) to motivate students to learn.

Basic Skills Program

Much research has been done concerning instruction in the basic skills. What emerges is a consistent pattern of findings that supports curriculum which include the following interrelated elements:

- 1. Expected outcomes - Sequenced skills arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels.
- 2. Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- 3. Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he/she has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- 4. Record keeping system - The student record keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. The system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school within the district where there is high mobility of students. (Cooley and Leinhardt, 1975; Harris and Serwer, 1966; Pigeon, 1970; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Education Programs that Work, USOE, 1978; Brophy and Evertson 1974; Tikunoff, Berliner and Rist, 1975; Bond and Dyskstra, 1967; Michigan State Department of Education, 1976; Edmonds, 1978; Bloom, 1980.)

Many programs incorporate these elements. Some of the most common labels include aligned curriculum, Right-to-Read, diagnostic/prescriptive, mastery learning, structured and continuous progress. There are hundreds of specific programs with these characteristics which research has shown to be effective. The major characteristic of these programs is the concept of taking the individual student through a sequenced set of learning outcomes at a rate consistent with his/her ability. The assumption is made that the student learns a higher level skill following mastery of a lower skill. This approach differs from grade level oriented programs which focus on the skills expected to be learned by the average student in a given grade.

Essential to the successful implementation of the curriculum component are the coordination and integration of instruction in basic skills both horizontally and vertically. The management design must draw together all personnel, materials and services (regardless of funding sources) in a uniform basic

skills effort across all grade levels. The management design focuses on a developmental program aimed at reducing the need for remediation. Remediation services (Title I, State Compensatory Education, volunteer services, child study teams, etc.) are closely coordinated with the developmental program. The classroom teacher is the manager of the child's program. All structural elements of the district's organization and all curricular components of the instructional program are centered on the primacy of the classroom teacher's role (Brinson, 1980).

The aligned curriculum approach does not require one-to-one instruction; however, it does require individualized planning and record keeping. Students may still be taught in groups, but frequent assessment of progress is used to regroup students based on current needs. The most effective grouping has the leader working with small groups of three to seven or large groups of eight or more in some situations. Children working alone, or with one or two other children plus the teacher, is negatively correlated with achievement (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1972-73; Soar, 1973).

The behavior exhibited by teachers forms the group rules by which instruction and interaction occur in the classroom. Research concludes that effective teachers provide strong leadership by directing activities in a businesslike way, as they manage the tasks and interactions of the classroom (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1972-73; Soar, 1973; Solomon and Kendall 1976). High achievement is more likely when teachers select the focus of the activities and apply appropriate principles of learning.

Achievement is lower in classes having a large amount of unsupervised seat work (Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Soar, 1973; and Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974). Moreover, effective teachers occupy the central role in the classroom and organize learning around questions which they pose. Inherent in management techniques of these teachers is the ability to maintain an intermediate position with respect to classroom control. Effective management in program improvement uses varied methods of control as opposed to a self-defeating management style based purely on criticism and rigidity (Soar, 1977). A well-managed classroom is one in which conditions for constructive rather than disruptive, deviate behavior prevail (Soar, 1973; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Bemis and Luft, 1970; Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976).

Another subject of study has been compensatory programs in basic skills. Schools have the option of serving the remedial needs of students in the regular classroom or in separate classes. In the regular classroom, the student to adult ratio is reduced, usually by adding a remedial teacher or aide for part of the day. However, some schools schedule those students not needing remediation, for other activities during the school day, leaving the regular classroom teacher with fewer students for remediation.

The other option for remediation is the use of "pull-out." Students in need of remediation are sent to separate remedial classes for part of the day. Research has shown that "pull-out" as a method of remediation results in the negative labeling of many students. Teachers view these students as less capable and, consequently, lower their expectations for them. Lower teacher expectations, therefore, result in lower levels of student achievement. Another problem with "pull-out" is the frequent lack of coordination of

teaching strategies - between the teacher and the special teacher - for the child's basic skills improvement plan. This results, then, in the student spending less time on tasks designed to correct basic skills deficiencies. Further, there is a consistent negative relationship between the time pupils spend in "pull-out" classes and reading and mathematics achievement (Glass and Smith, 1979).

Summary of Variables

A. The Developmental Instructional Program

The planned and classroom implemented curriculum includes the following aligned and interrelated elements:

- . Expected outcomes - Sequenced skills arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels and are related to the standardized tests used in the district.
- . Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- . Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- . Record-keeping system - The student record-keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. Within a district where there is high mobility of students, the system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school.

B. Compensatory Instruction

- . Supports the developmental program
- . If remediation takes place through "pull-out" the negative effects are minimized
- . If remediation takes place in the classroom, provision is made for adequate services for all students needing remediation

C. Instructional management includes:

- . classroom teacher-managed instruction
- . strong direct leadership by teachers
- . flexible grouping of students based on assessed learner needs
- . positive methods of control
- . in-class compensatory education
- . lack of classroom disruption

Instructional Time

Most educators would agree that children who spend more time in learning-related activities tend to learn more. However, time is often not treated as a resource that can be manipulated to improve student learning, as educators tend to think of time as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for learning. That is, they generally feel that it is not only the quantity but also the quality of time spent in a learning situation that determines a student's progress.

Recent research has begun to focus attention on both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the time concept. So, the literature in this area is beginning to offer guidance to schools not only about the importance of how much time is made available for student learning, but also about more effective ways to use time (LeCompet, 1979). The pervasive influence of time on student achievement is developed in a model of "Individual Instructional Exposure and Achievement" (Wiley and Harnischfeger, 1974). For example, the overall importance of time-to-learn has been repeatedly emphasized by Bloom (1980) and Carroll (1963). Also, a number of studies have shown significant correlations between student learning and the following variables: a longer school day (Bond and Dykstra, 1967); number of days of student and teacher absence (Rosenshine, 1971); average number of hours of schooling (Wiley and Harnischfeger, 1974); amount of time spent on academic activities (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974); and student engaged time (Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study, 1978). Moreover, the importance of active engagement on the part of both teachers and students in the instructional process is often emphasized.

The Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study or BTES study (Phase III, 1978) developed a model of instructional processes which focused on reading and mathematics instruction at the elementary school level. This classroom model acknowledges the common sense view that, for a given student, certain instructional processes lead to student classroom learning which is then reflected in achievement test scores. An analysis of the research suggests that improved student learning results from increasing the amount of time in a school day, or from assigning more time to instruction in a particular subject area. However, the most important consideration might be to take steps to ensure that teachers spend more time on instruction-related activities. Teacher time-on-task may be increased by achieving better classroom control, or improved organization of instruction, or by more effective use of instruction materials. In this sense, time may be a concept that cuts across many of the variables to be considered in the school effectiveness research.

Summary of Variables

- A. Time in Basic Skills Instruction - The school allocates sufficient instructional time to the teaching of reading and math and, when necessary, increases this time to provide for additional instruction. Student and teacher attendance provides for maximum basic skills instruction.
- B. Classroom Instructional Time - Teachers use the time allocated to the teaching of reading and math by applying effective strategies for organizing and managing the learning environment.

- C. Student Engaged Time - In reading and math instruction, students spend a high proportion of their time engaged in academic work.

Parent/Community Relations

"The family is the central, most important long lasting learning institution a child experiences" (Gordon, 1979). Research justifies this statement by indicating that parental involvement in the educational process can greatly enhance a child's prospects for academic success (Bronfenbrenner, 1978; Bloom, 1980; Clark, Lotto and McCarthy, 1980). According to Gordon (1979), parents can interact with the educational system as (1) teachers of their own children, (2) adult learners of new skills, (3) volunteers in the classroom, (4) paid para-professionals, and (5) decision-makers and policy advisors.

When the parent acts as tutor in the home, research indicates that benefits accrue to all the children in the home as well as to the parent-tutor (Olmsted, 1979; Gordon, 1979). Home tutoring positively affects a child's language development, his/her general aptitude for learning and his/her motivation to learn in school (Bloom, 1980; Bronfenbrenner, 1978). Further, when parents are involved as teachers of their own children a number of possible benefits occur, including increased parent/child transaction, increased home/school understanding, and conceivable cost benefits to the overall institutional effort (Harrison & Wilkinson, 1978; Gordon, 1979; Rich, Van Dien and Maltos, 1979).

Research indicates that when parents work as a para-professional or classroom volunteer they gain a sense of self-sufficiency and self-confidence. These roles have included professional training and have often allowed opportunities for advancement. Para-professional and volunteer work also impact on the system, affecting the school in terms of manpower, public relations, policy alignment and general family services (medical and such) (True, 1979; Gordon, 1979).

For the role of the parent as a decision-maker to function optimally, schools and administrators must be cognizant of the social, political, economic and educational factors concerning the parent body (True, 1979). Parents as decision-makers can function on three levels (1) the individual level (choice of school, teachers, etc.), (2) school level (e.g., PTA involvement), and (3) community level (as board member, citizen advisory or parent advocate) (Davies, Burges, Hirsch, Hirsch, Hugenin, Upton, and Zerchykov, 1979; True, 1979). When parents feel their input and involvement has a meaning, they are more likely to participate in the system.

All programs involving parents and the community ought to be part of a larger school-wide plan. The school should identify parent/community goals, as well as identify strategies for enlisting parents and mobilizing the resources of the home. In successful parent participation programs, roles are clearly identified and the school has devised methods of evaluation (Davies, et al. 1979; Hugenin, et al. 1979).

Because parent and community involvement essentially can impact heavily on the total educational scheme, it is incumbent on schools to encourage and to facilitate this interaction. Rich, et al. (1979) and Rutter (1979) have identified some means by which principals and teachers can involve parents.

They can:

- . raise consciousness about the home and community as the key to student achievement; publicize and support ideas, materials and strategies that promote this belief
- . encourage student, parent, and teacher projects in the community
- . recognize that parents are a significant force in their child's education; search for ways to involve parents as educational partners
- . show parents in a variety of ways that they care for them and their children; inform parents regularly of what is happening in school on a regular basis; offer a variety of school-parent programs and materials designed to build the home/school/community educational partnership
- . encourage parents to visit the school, confer with school staff regularly and to use the school as a source for help and referral to community agencies
- . teach parents how they can help their children at home; provide home learning tips on how to supplement the work of the school
- . utilize effectively the contribution of parents' skills, insights, talents and concerns to the educational process
- . use the resources of the home for materials and ideas for different subject areas
- . adapt successful program practices from the preschool and elementary levels to the needs of older students and their families
- . set up a functional design for operating a parent advisory council at the school; combine specific tasks and advisory functions as a focus for positive parental efforts.

Essentially, the efforts of teachers and administrators should be directed at reducing the divergency between parents and educators. When the home and the school have congruent learning emphases, the child has little difficulty in his later school learning (Bloom, 1980), and the child's attitudes and achievement level are likely to be enhanced.

Citizens and educators are recognizing that improvement in the schools and community support for education occurs only when schools and communities are open to each other and when the educational consumer (student, parent and community member) has a strong, honest part in setting policy and making decisions (National Institute of Education, 1978; U.S. Office of Education, 1979; Davies, 1976).

Above all, parents want safe schools. The most recent Gallup Poll on public attitudes toward education ranked discipline as the number one concern of parents. For the past decade, the use of alcohol and drugs has continued, for

the past decade, to assume a priority in the public's concern about public schools. Crime and vandalism, in the latest survey, received sufficient mentions to place it among the top 10 major problems (Elam, 1978). Research indicates that where violence levels are high, teaching and learning are negatively affected by a school climate that is dominated by fear (National Institute of Education, 1978).

The Safe School Study Report (National Institute of Education, 1978) cited community-school relations as a factor in the incidence of school crime and misbehavior. Schools having good relationships with the surrounding communities tend to have less of a problem. The more support a school receives from parents, community agencies, police, the board of education and other sources, the safer the school will be (National Institute of Education, 1978).

Progress in education is more likely to occur within the context of collaborative partnership involving the home, school, community and municipality (National Institute of Education, 1978; U.S. Office of Education, 1979).

Summary of Variables

- A. Parent/Community Relations and the Basic Skills Program - The school communicates with parents and community members about the basic skills program (e.g., student expectations, content of instruction, evaluation, reporting system) and also encourages parents to communicate with the school and become involved with the instructional program.
- B. Parent/Community Relations and the Non-Instructional Processes - The administration and teachers communicate with the parents and community regarding school policies and practices, and they encourage active participation of parents for the purpose of providing a safe, pleasant and effective learning environment.

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COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS

SUMMER, 1980

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR REVIEW

TEAM MEMBERS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	1
I. Preparing for a Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review . . .	1
Studying the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Materials	2
Participating in the Training Program	6
II. Conducting the School Visit	10
Collecting and Analyzing Information.	10
Preparing and Presenting the Final Report	14
 Appendix A: A Sample Training Program Agenda for Comprehensive Review Teams	 19
 Appendix B: Sample Schedule for a Team Visit	 22

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS

Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review (CBSPR) is an essential part of the overall evaluation and improvement process called "Thorough and Efficient" (T&E) education. The review is conducted by teams of experienced educators and knowledgeable community persons who are asked to go into selected schools in order to compare the local basic skills programs with a set of standards derived from studies of effective schools. The purpose of a program review is two-fold: (1) to analyze the strengths and the weaknesses of an individual school's basic skills program according to research guidelines, and (2) to provide a set of recommendations to the school for program improvements that have strong potential for increasing the basic skills performance of students. These recommendations are designed for use by schools in developing their own basic skills improvement plan.

This procedural guide was developed by the department to both aid in the individual reviews and to help ensure a consistent standards of quality throughout the statewide review process. It is specifically addressed to those people who are serving as reviewers on a comprehensive review team. The document is divided into two major sections. The first section details the tasks to be followed in preparing for a comprehensive basic skills program review and the second section focuses on conducting the review.

I. PREPARING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

Preparation for a comprehensive basic skills program review involves two major tasks. A team member needs to study the written materials to be utilized in the review and to participate in training sessions conducted by the New Jersey State Department of Education.

Studying the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Materials

When a person agrees to serve on a comprehensive review team (CRT), he or she will receive a package of materials to be used in the review process. Specifically the package will include: (1) An Overview of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process; (2) A Procedural Guide for Program Reviewers (i.e., the present document); (3) Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs; (4) Report Forms; and (5) School Descriptive Information. Preparation for training essentially involves careful study of these documents by each member of the review team, and identification of questions and issues requiring later clarification at the training session.* The following is a brief description of the nature of each document and its function in the overall review process.

An Overview of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process

The purpose of this document is to provide reviewers with an initial understanding of the overall review process and how the process fits into the framework of T&E legislation. Also, the overview offers general information concerning the roles and responsibilities of the different state, county, and local groups involved in each stage of the review. Finally, the document contains a schedule of dates relative to the review process and a bibliography of all the research studies that were used in developing the materials used in the process.

*Should a team member wish additional information on the "T&E" evaluation and classification process or on the roles and responsibilities of the various other groups involved in the process, the county office staff will be able to supply additional documents discussing these topics.

Procedural Guide for Program Reviewers

The present document is designed to provide reviewers with a guide to tasks to be performed during the comprehensive basic skills program review process. Each reviewer should study the procedural guide as soon as possible in order to gain an understanding of the process and to develop a list of issues to be discussed in the forthcoming training program.

It is important, however, to recognize that neither the procedural guide nor the training program can provide reviewers with detailed step-by-step directions about how to conduct a program review. Stated another way, the reviewer needs to use a considerable amount of professional expertise and judgment in order to adjust the process to meet the specific problems and conditions in a particular school situation.

Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs

The guidelines are designed to provide reviewers with a research based structure for collecting and reporting relevant data concerning a school's basic skills program. There are separate guidelines for use in elementary and secondary schools. Appropriate use of the guidelines by reviewers is vital to ensure consistency across the different comprehensive review teams who are analyzing basic skills programs in schools throughout the state. Five major areas of a school's basic skills program are covered in this document:

- . District policies and school management practices
- . Staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations
- . Basic skills program
- . Instructional time
- . Parent and community relations

A number of factors under each area are identified and explained. In addition, the reviewer is provided with a short outline of suggested procedures and sources of information to be considered in analyzing each factor. To further structure data collection with reference to each factor, specific indicators of important aspects of the overall factor are noted, and space for reviewer comments is provided beside these indicators. Finally, space is provided in the guidelines for reviewers to draw conclusions from the data they have collected with reference to each factor and to make recommendations. An illustration of the materials to be used in analyzing one factor is provided in Appendix A.

The purpose, nature, and use of the guidelines is described in detail in the introductory section of the document itself. Since this is the basic instrument to be used in the comprehensive review process, each reviewer should carefully study its contents and note any questions or problems that require further clarification or discussion in the training program.

While the entire document deserves detailed study, each reviewer should pay particular attention to the areas he or she will be reviewing. The overall composition of a typical team and their areas of responsibility are indicated below:*

Team Members

Chairman

School Administrator

Reading Specialist/Teacher

Assigned Area(s)

District policies and school management practices

Staff knowledge, attitudes, and expectations

Basic skills program (reading) -
Instructional time (reading)

*Variations in the composition of a team may be needed in some school situations due to the size of the school or to the number of subject areas to be reviewed (i.e., reading or mathematics or both).

Team Members

Math Specialist/Teacher

School Administrator
or Community PersonAssigned Area(s)Basic skills program (math) -
Instructional time (math)

Parent-community relations

As each reviewer studies his or her assigned area, it is particularly important to gain a clear understanding of the research base that supports the selection of factors. Each factor and its associated indicators were derived from research results showing relationships between these alterable characteristics of a school's program and student performance in the basic skills. The relevant research in each area is briefly reviewed in the guidelines to help the reviewer understand how these factors are defined and why they were selected as possible targets for improvement. Reviewers might also consider reading the studies cited in the research reviews. Many of the studies can be found in a large educational library. A complete set of all documents cited in the guidelines is also available at the New Jersey State Department of Education in Trenton.

Report Forms

The Report Forms provide a vehicle for organizing and communicating the team's conclusions and recommendations concerning a school's basic skills program. In essence, this document consists of forms to be used by the review team as they summarize their findings.

Most of the forms provided here are also contained in the Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs. The forms in the guidelines are used by the reviewer to organize a preliminary set of conclusions and recommendations. The identical pages in the Report Forms are used to record a final set of conclusions and recommendations. Specific information about how to complete these forms is provided in a later section of this document.

School Descriptive Information

Each team will be assigned responsibility for reviewing the basic skills program in a particular school. Descriptive information about the school to be visited will be included in the package sent to each reviewer. Additional information about the school will be given in both oral and written form during and after the training session.

The descriptive information sent to each reviewer will vary somewhat from one school to another. However, most reviewers will receive: (a) demographic information (e.g., size, grade levels, racial composition); (b) test score information (e.g., Minimum Basic Skills test results, local test scores); (c) monitoring reports on the school's basic skills program prepared by the school program coordinator; (d) information about the school's curriculum and instructional program; and (e) any other relevant descriptive material (e.g., background on the community).

The reviewer should study these materials with a view toward developing an understanding of the school's context, its needs, and its educational program. The constraints and opportunities for school improvement that exist in the school's environment might also be noted. The reviewer should be prepared to raise questions about the school (or to request additional information) during the training program.

Participating in the Training Program

Reviewers must participate in a one-day training program to be held about two weeks in advance of the school visit. The purpose of the training program is to provide background and knowledge required to conduct an effective comprehensive basic skills program review. Reviewers will also meet as a team to organize their visit and to get first hand information about the school from the school program coordinator.

The training program will be attended by persons from a number of different review teams, and will include both general sessions and some small group meetings. There will also be a special session for team leaders, geared to familiarizing them with the additional responsibilities of their position. A possible agenda for a training program is shown in Appendix A and discussed on the following page.

Introduction to Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review

This session is divided into three parts. The first part, an overview of the T&E evaluation process, is designed to help reviewers understand how their activity fits within the larger structure of "Thorough and Efficient" education, and how the materials were developed within this context. The second and third parts focus on the purpose of a comprehensive basic skills program review and on an overview of the process itself. This session, then, is aimed at providing some important background information for the reviewers.

Group Roles and Responsibilities

Involved in the comprehensive review process are school program coordinators, a local review team, district superintendents, school boards, school administration and staff, as well as the review team and its leader. This session outlines the roles and responsibilities of each team member as well as the functions of the numerous other people involved.

Discussion of Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Materials

The package of materials sent to reviewers in advance of this meeting (i.e., the materials described in the previous section) will be discussed during this session. All of the materials provided in the package will be reviewed. Special emphasis will be placed on the Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs and the Report Forms. Time will be scheduled for discussion of any questions the reviewers may have about the materials.

Activities of the Comprehensive Review Team

The first part of this session will outline the activities of the comprehensive review team as they conduct a school visit. The second part will consist of comments and reports by a panel of people who served as reviewers in the pilot phase of the development of this process. The panel will also answer any questions prospective reviewers might have.

Techniques for Collecting and Reporting on Relevant Program Information

This session is designed to provide reviewers with basic information about techniques they might use in collecting, analyzing, and reporting information in an efficient manner. Emphasis will be placed on using materials productively, on interviewing techniques in individual and group situations, and on writing final reports in a manner appropriate for use by the local school as they develop a remedial plan.

Working with the Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs: Skill Area Meetings

Five simultaneous training sessions will be conducted involving reviewers from different comprehensive review teams who are assigned to a particular area (e.g., district policies and school management practices). Emphasis will be on an in-depth study of the research findings in the area, the factors to be examined in the review, and the questions to be asked of the school staff.

Site Team Meetings

This session is designed to bring together the people who will be involved in a particular school (i.e., the comprehensive program review team and the school program coordinator). Two topics are scheduled for discussion. First, the team members will discuss the school situation with the coordinators. The team members might want to raise questions about the descriptive information they received earlier or to ask for additional information about the school. The school program coordinator may have additional descriptive information about the school to distribute at this time. Second, the team members and the coordinator need to develop a schedule for the team's visit. (A sample schedule of activities, discussed later in this document, might be used as a guide to the development of this preliminary schedule.) Although this schedule may be modified somewhat before the visit, it is very important for the team and the coordinator to establish a sequence of activities so the necessary arrangements for these activities can be made at the local school level.

Questions and Group Discussion

The small group meetings may generate additional questions or issues that need to be discussed by the entire group before adjournment. Such discussion is scheduled for this time period.

Team Leader's Meeting

After the training session, time will be allotted for a meeting of team leaders. The purpose of the session will be to focus on additional organizational and leadership functions of the team leader and on responding to any questions he or she might have regarding the role to be played.

This phase of activity is completed at the conclusion of the training program. No further contact is scheduled among team members (or between the team and the local school staff) until the school visit. However, team members should feel free to contact their team leader to discuss questions or problems that might arise before the school visit.

II. CONDUCTING THE SCHOOL VISIT

Team members typically have three days in which to conduct a review of a school's basic skills program. The timing of activities during these three days will vary from one school to another; nevertheless, the activities themselves should remain constant. A sample schedule of activities during a team visit is provided in Appendix B.

Generally speaking, during the initial two days a team will focus on activities that require the collection and analysis of information, and will work primarily with the Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs. During the last day, the major activities of a team consist of preparing a final report and presenting the report to the local review team and school staff. The Report Forms are used in this stage. Both levels of activity are described below.

Collecting and Analyzing Information

Information collection and analysis techniques are used continuously during the first two days of the visit, although occasionally team members will need to collect or analyze some additional data on the last day. Despite the close relationship between information collection and analysis, these activities are discussed separately in the following pages.

Collecting Information

The task of interviewing begins shortly after arrival at the school site on the first day. The comprehensive review team will have met earlier (around 8:00 a.m.) with the school program coordinator to review the plans for the visit; discuss any school rules or restrictions that team members need to observe; and obtain floor plans, organizational charts, faculty lists and other school data. After this short session, the team leader, in conjunction with all comprehensive review team members, will conduct a group interview with the school's administrative staff (e.g., school principal and district superintendent) about district policies and school management practices. The team chairman should plan and provide leadership for the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is for the team to get an overview of the policies and organization of the school and district. The chairman should use the "District Policies and School Management Practices" section of the guidelines as a basis for developing questions for this meeting. An organizational chart of the district may also help to guide the team in developing questions.

Following a tour of the facility conducted by the school principal, each team member will begin collecting specific information by interviewing their counterparts on the local review team (LRT).

The LRT has been selected by the administration based on their knowledge of the specific areas to be reviewed by the CRT. These individuals provide an initial response concerning the school's programs and practices as they relate to the factors. For each CRT area the district has selected two or more local educators or community members. In addition to providing initial information to the team, it is recommended that the LRT play a role in developing the remedial plan for the school.

Example of LRT Composition

<u>Areas</u>	<u>Local Review Team</u>
District policies and school management practices	School Principal and District Superintendent
Staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations	Administrator and Teacher
Program/time (reading)	Reading Supervisor and Reading Teacher
Program/time (math)	Math Supervisors and Math Teacher
Parent and community	School Board Member, Parent and Student (where appropriate)

All schools may not be able to release all LRT members at the same time. If this is the case, the CRT will have to schedule these interviews throughout the first day.

The CRT members should follow the guidelines in interviewing the LRT members and make notes related to each indicator. These are preliminary notes to guide the team member in collecting other data.

Following the meetings with the LRT members each CRT member plans their own data collection procedures. Suggestions are given in the guidelines under each factor concerning procedures to follow and sources of information. In planning the rest of the day one and all of day two team members must do both individual and group planning. For example, several team members may want to interview a particular member of the central office staff requiring coordination of the interview schedule. It is also important that all teachers of basic skills have at least some contact with the team. It will take team coordination to accomplish this contact. In observing classrooms it is important to be as unobtrusive as possible; therefore, several team members should not visit the same classroom together.

Another technique for gathering information is through document reviews. Each section of the guidelines outlines specific materials that might be reviewed by team members. These materials include texts, curriculum guides, teacher gradebooks, report forms, lesson plans, as well as supplemental materials. Also, team members should seek out other documents pertinent to the factors in the guidelines, such as school policy statements, discipline codes, student handbooks, and the like. Examination of these materials will support conclusions drawn from other informational sources.

Analyzing Information

Information analysis and synthesis are largely individual processes, but these processes can be facilitated by group discussion. A major function of the team leader is to organize group meetings at the beginning and at the end of each day. The purposes of these meetings are not only to coordinate the day's schedules and to resolve procedural questions, but also to discuss impressions team members have developed about the school and its programs, trends that seem to be emerging, and hypotheses about areas of needed improvement. Furthermore, at these sessions team members can outline plans for testing the validity of their hypotheses through the collection of additional data.

Ultimately, each team member has to draw his or her conclusions from the data collected and make recommendations. Conclusions should reflect the judgment of the team member and not simply restate the facts. The recommendations should proceed logically from the conclusions and reflect the perspective of the guidelines. Reviewers should prepare a tentative set of conclusions and recommendations for their area as soon as possible in order to facilitate the writing of the final report. Upon completing this draft, data

collection and initial analysis are at an end and the team is ready to begin assembling the final report.

Preparing and Presenting the Final Report

On the third day of the school visit, the review team's activities will shift from the collection and analysis of information to the preparation and presentation of the final report. Directions for performing the activities during this second phase of the school visit are provided in the following pages.

Preparing the Final Report

At the beginning of the third day, the team leader normally calls a team meeting to discuss the tentative conclusions and recommendations reached by each team member. At this time, the team also prepares an outline for the content to be included in the "General Comments" section of the final report, and the "Team's Major Recommendations for Improvement in Priority Order."

At the end of the meeting, team members will separate to write their individual reports for a particular area. The team leader will write the "General Comments" and "Major Recommendations" as well as the report for the "district policies and school management practices" area. When the rough drafts are completed, team members will reassemble to review and comment on the reports before they are presented to the school staff. Some guidelines for preparing each section of the final report are presented below.

General Comments. The aim of this introductory section of the final report is to establish the overall context and tone for the rest of the report. The comments should address each of the major areas reviewed by the

team (e.g., district policies) and outline specific findings and trends in these areas. This discussion should emphasize areas where the school is performing effectively as well as those areas that need improvement. Also included among the comments should be an acknowledgement of the support provided by school and district personnel. These written comments can serve as an introduction to the oral presentation to the local review team and school staff discussed in the following section and to the introduction in the final written report.

Major Recommendations for Improvement. This section identifies the elements of the school's programs that are most in need of improvement and suggests possible courses of action. These recommendations should be specific and clearly and concisely stated, and should be a synthesis of the more detailed recommendations for each factor discussed below. Recommendations should be organized under the six major area headings contained in the guidelines. Each section should be further divided into short (less than 18 months) and long term (more than 18 months) recommendations. These recommendations will serve as the basis for the school's remedial plan. In order to be useful to the district the recommendations should be very specific. Districts will be given the option of accepting these recommendations and incorporating them directly into their remedial plan.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Each Factor. This activity essentially involves putting the team's conclusions and recommendations about each factor into final form. Team members should review their comments, conclusions, and recommendations and prepare a final report on each factor using the appropriate pages in the Report Forms. Again, it is important to

emphasize that these conclusions should not be a simple restatement of facts but rather an expression of the overall opinion of the reviewer about the quality of the program in this area.

When all of these reports have been written, the team is prepared to make its presentations to the local school staff. Generally speaking a good final report has the following qualities:

- . It is consistent throughout. All the different parts blend together in a logical fashion.
- . It is organized around the areas and factors outlined in the Guidelines.
- . It is written in a specific, clear and concise fashion that can be understood by different groups within the school community.
- . It is comprehensive, incorporating school data gleaned from interviews, observations and document reviews.
- . It contains specific long and short term recommendations that can be translated into action by the school.

Presentation of the Final Report

At the end of the third day, the team makes two separate presentations of their findings: first to the administrators and/or local review team and then to the entire school staff. The structure of the presentations may vary from school to school. In some situations, an oral presentation of the findings specified in the report may involve an informal discussion with a question and answer period. In other situations, the presentation may be more formal. In any case, team members should make note of the different groups to whom they are talking and address their comments appropriately.

All members of the comprehensive review team should participate in the oral presentations of the report. The team leader might summarize the general comments of the team. Each team member can then give a brief review of the findings in their area. Finally, the team leader might present the overall conclusions and recommendations.

Comments should emphasize positive aspects of the school's program as well as areas needing improvement. They should be designed to enlist local support for the improvement effort as well as to give an accurate picture of the tasks that need to be undertaken by the school. Lastly, the comments should accurately mirror the written material that will be included in the completed final report that the district will receive.

At the end of the school visit, the team leader should have in hand the final reports of each team member and the total report should be given to the school program coordinator for typing. The final report will be given to the district within ten days.

At this point, the work of the comprehensive review team is completed but the improvement task has only just begun. The school will analyze the report and use it as a basis for developing a plan to up-grade their basic skills program. Ultimately, the work of the comprehensive review team may be realized in the form of increased learning of the basic skills by all students in the school.

APPENDIX A

A SAMPLE TRAINING PROGRAM AGENDA
FOR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TEAMS

TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TEAM

GENERAL SESSION

Introduction to Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review

- . Overview of T&E Evaluation Process
- . Purpose of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review
- . Overview of the Comprehensive Review Process

Group Roles and Responsibilities

- . Comprehensive Review Team and Team Leader
- . Local Review Team and District Staff
- . County Office and School Program Coordinator

Discussion of Review Materials

- . Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs
- . Report Forms

Activities of the Comprehensive Review Team

- . Conducting the School Visit
- . Comprehensive Review Team Panel Reports

TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TEAM

Techniques for Collecting and Reporting on Relevant Program Information

- . Use of Materials and Data on District
- . Interview Techniques
- . Writing Final Reports

GROUP LUNCH

SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

Working with the Guidelines: Skill Area Meetings

- . District Policies and School Management Practices
- . Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations
- . Basic Skills Program/Instructional Time/Reading
- . Basic Skills Program/Instructional Time/Math
- . Parent and Community Relations

On-Site Team Meetings (Comprehensive Review Team, School Program Coordinator)

- . Discussion of School Situation
- . Organization of School Visit

GENERAL SESSION

Questions and Group Discussion

TEAM LEADERS' MEETING

APPENDIX B
SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR TEAM VISIT

Sample Schedule for Team Visit

FIRST DAY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
8:00 a.m.	Comprehensive Review Team and school program coordinator meet at school to review schedule and other plans for visit.	Library
8:30 a.m.	Team Leader (and other team members) conduct group interview with principal and superintendent about "District Policies and School Management Practices".	Library
10:00 a.m.	Principal conducts tour of school facility.	
10:30 a.m.	Each Comprehensive Review Team member interviews a counterpart Local Review Team member to collect preliminary information in assigned areas.	Designated Offices
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Team members continue to collect preliminary information from school staff through interviews, classroom observation, or other methods.	
2:30 p.m.	Team members meet to discuss preliminary findings and further data collection activities.	Library

SECOND DAY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
8:00 a.m.	Team members meet to coordinate data collection activities during the day.	Library
8:30 a.m.	A schedule for each team member's activities is prepared in consultation with the school principal.	Library
9:00 a.m.	Team members collect additional information in each area to verify data already collected and to explore preliminary findings.	Various Locations
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Individual data collection activities.	Various Locations
2:30 p.m.	Team members write tentative "conclusions and recommendations" in their assigned areas.	Library

THIRD DAY

8:00 a.m.	Team members meet to discuss their conclusions and recommendations, and to outline the team report.	Library
10:30 a.m.	Team members write their final reports. Team Leader writes the overall team report.	Library
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Team meets to review final reports and prepare oral presentation.	Library
2:00 p.m.	Team leader and team members present final report in oral form to the local review team.	Library
3:00 p.m.	Team leader and team members give oral report of findings to entire school staff.	Auditorium



COMPREHENSIVE
BASIC SKILLS
PROGRAM REVIEW

SUMMER, 1980

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR
SCHOOL STAFF

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR SCHOOL STAFF

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PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR SCHOOL STAFF

This document outlines the procedures to be followed by schools which are scheduled for a comprehensive basic skills program review. It consists of three sections: Overview of Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process, Responsibilities and Activities of School Staff, and Preparation of a Remedial Plan.

Overview of Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process

A comprehensive review of the basic skills program and related school factors is intended to provide a school and district with a detailed diagnosis of problems related to achievement of students in the basic skills. A Comprehensive Review Team (CRT) will make recommendations to assist the district and school to develop a remedial plan which, when implemented, has a high probability of improving basic skills performance.

A school which has less than 65 percent of its students meeting the state minimum standard on MBS tests, and where the test results have remained static or declined since 1977-78, will be scheduled for a comprehensive basic skills program review unless an acceptable rebuttal is submitted by the district.

The comprehensive basic skills program review is designed to analyze the existing school program and practices in relationship to those factors which have been identified, through research, to be associated with successful achievement in basic skills. Research has shown that no single factor is associated with successful education; rather, it is a network of interlocking components. These factors include (1) district policies and school management practices, (2) staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations, (3) basic skills program, (4) instructional time, and (5) parent/community relations. Therefore, the comprehensive review team will look at school practices broadly, not just at the formal basic skills program.

Through this structured review process, the department plans to provide districts with recommendations that have a high probability of leading to improvement in basic skills. It is the district's responsibility, however, to develop a remedial plan which appropriately fits its needs and resources.

Comprehensive Review Team (CRT)

In cases where comprehensive basic skills program reviews are needed, the county superintendent will select teams of about five persons from a list developed by the Commissioner of Education. Comprehensive review team members will have a variety of backgrounds and will be selected because of their knowledge of schools and basic skills.

The team will spend approximately three days at a school interviewing staff, reviewing policies and materials, and observing educational practices. (See Appendix A for sample schedule.) Each school will be asked to appoint a local review team consisting of administrators, teachers and parents. It is recommended that this local team be actively involved in the three-day site review as well as in the preparation of a remedial plan.

The comprehensive review team will meet with the local review team at the outset of the visit to provide initial information, and at the end of the review to discuss findings and recommendations. The final report of the team will be sent to the district within ten days of the visit.

The comprehensive basic skills program review is designed both as a service and as a statewide effort to improve education. Districts are not required to follow the recommendations of the comprehensive review team in preparing a remedial plan. However, if recommendations are not followed, it is expected that the district would provide strong rationale to support the proposed alternative strategies which it considers more likely to lead to improvement in basic skills achievement in its particular situation.

Responsibilities and Activities of School Staff

Practically all staff in a school will be involved in one way or another in the comprehensive review process. The roles of two different groups of school staff are discussed in this section: school administrators and staff, and the local review team.

School Administrators and Staff

The district superintendent will be actively involved in coordinating and overseeing the comprehensive basic skills program review. As the educational leader of the district, the superintendent's responsibilities are to:

- . coordinate dates for the Comprehensive Review Team visit with county office staff.
- . organize an orientation to the comprehensive basic skills program review process for school staff and participate in the orientation
- . make central office staff available to the CRT
- . be available to discuss district policies with the CRT
- . transmit the CRT report to the board of education and to the school
- . ensure the preparation of a remedial plan and its approval by the board of education
- . oversee the implementation of the remedial plan.

School improvement is a building level phenomenon and the school principal is key to preparing for the comprehensive review team's visit and conducting a successful review. Responsibilities of the principal before and during the review include:

- . meeting with the county school program coordinator to learn about the comprehensive review process and to schedule the visit

- . participating in the selection of the local review team
- . meeting with the local review team and with school staff in order to explain the comprehensive review process and enlist their support
- . scheduling conference and workroom space for the CRT
- . arranging for lunches at the school for team members
- . making staff available in accordance with the CRT's schedule of interviews and observations
- . providing relevant school data for CRT members
- . participating in a discussion of the results of the comprehensive basic skills program review
- . organizing a staff meeting to hear the CRT's recommendations
- . monitoring the development and implementation of the remedial plan

The comprehensive program review process is different in many ways from other school evaluation processes. It represents a "comprehensive" look at one portion of the school program, i.e., the basic skills program. It is important for the school staff to understand that the comprehensive review team is reviewing the basic skills program against research factors and not the team members' individual preferences. Moreover, the team's final recommendations do not represent mandatory changes. What is mandatory is that the school consider these recommendations and develop a remedial plan.

At the request of the administration, the school staff is responsible for assembling relevant data about the school and the students and for meeting and talking with the review team. Also, staff will meet with the Comprehensive Review Team to hear the CRT's analysis and recommendations. Lastly, the staff will contribute to the development and implementation of the remedial plan.

Local Review Team (LRT)

A local review team is a formally constituted group which is authorized to engage in tasks related to a school improvement effort in basic skills. The basic responsibilities of the Local Review Team are (1) to help the school prepare for the visit, (2) to participate in the comprehensive basic skills program review, and (3) to prepare a written remedial plan. The remedial plan will be submitted to the county superintendent and to the Commissioner of Education for final approval. The local review team should be closely involved in the comprehensive program review process because recommendations for inclusion in the remedial plan will result from the comprehensive basic skills program review.

The local review team consists of 5 to 10 persons from the school staff and school community. It is suggested that this team include:

- . principal
- . specialists (i.e., reading, math, guidance)
- . teachers
- . supervisors
- . parent/community representatives, board members, and students (where appropriate)

The following chart shows the relationship between the local review team, the comprehensive review team, and the areas of program review.

<u>Local Review Team Members</u>	<u>Comprehensive Review Team Counterparts</u>	<u>Comprehensive Program Review Areas</u>
Principal District Superintendent	Team Leader	District policies and school management practices
Administrator Teacher	School Administrator	Staff knowledge, atti- tudes and expectations

<u>Local Review Team Members</u>	<u>Comprehensive Review Team Counterparts</u>	<u>Comprehensive Program Review Areas</u>
Reading Supervisor Reading Teacher Teacher	Reading Specialist	Basic skills program (reading)
		Instructional time (reading)
Math Supervisor Teacher	Mathematics Specialist	Basic skills program (math)
		Instructional time (math)
School Board Members Parent and Student (where appropriate)	School Administrator or Community Person	Parent-community relations

The local review team is responsible for:

- . reading the comprehensive basic skills program review materials in advance of the site visit
- . participating in an orientation of school staff on the comprehensive program review process and CRT visit
- . providing descriptive information requested by the CRT and/or any other information that the local staff believes would help the visiting team to better understand the school (e.g., school's philosophy, the community it serves, operation of the basic skills program)
- . reviewing the verbal and written reports prepared by the CRT.
- . participating in meetings with the entire school staff to discuss the CRT's recommendations, the school's remedial plan, and how the remedial plan will be implemented
- . assisting the school district in translating the CRT's recommendations into a remedial plan
- . participating in the implementation of the remedial plan.

The activities of the CRT in connection with each of these major responsibilities is discussed in more detail in the remainder of this section.

The department has prepared a series of documents which describe and clarify the comprehensive program review process. The LRT will be provided with a packet of information prior to the CRT visit. This information should be read and verbally reviewed well in advance of the visit.

The district staff and LRT will provide an orientation to the comprehensive program review process for school staff. It is recommended that the total staff of the school receives information which addresses the following questions:

- . Why are we having this CRT visit?
- . What is the purpose of a CRT visit?
- . What will happen during the three-day visit?
- . Who will be involved with the CRT?
- . What is the role of the LRT?
- . What happens after the visit?

In preparing for this orientation, the LRT and school staff will need to decide:

- . who will conduct the orientation? (Usually the principal conducts this session, but other LRT members may assist and the county office staff may be asked to help answer questions.)
- . what written material would be useful to school staff?
- . how soon before the visit should the orientation occur? (An orientation generally takes about one hour to conduct.)

Note: The Overview of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Review Process should be of assistance in conducting this session.

The LRT represents a cross-section (or all) of the comprehensive basic skills review program team (i.e., administrative, supervisory and instructional staff for both the developmental and supplemental programs). As such,

team members are asked to provide initial information concerning the school's program and practices. LRT members will meet on the first day of the school visit with their counterpart on the CRT team. The school will need to schedule time for these interviews. CRT members will ask LRT members to describe such things as:

- . what is included in the program
- . how the program works
- . staff roles in relation to program organization
- . staff attitudes on the effectiveness of the program
- . Suggestions from the staff on how the program could be improved.

The LRT will be collecting and organizing information of this kind for the CRT. The following questions should be considered in preparing for the CRT's visit:

- . What kind of information will the CRT need?
- . What sources of information are available?
- . How will the information be organized?
- . What information is required for each of the CRT members and/or all members?
- . How soon before the visit should CRT members have this information in order to adequately prepare for the visit?

Note: The county office school program coordinator can serve as a useful resource in identifying specific information as well as identifying sources of information.

Prior to the verbal presentation to the total staff, the CRT will verbally present its findings and recommendations to the LRT and administrative staff. The LRT is asked to participate in this discussion to insure a concise

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 193 270

TM 800 585

TITLE Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review.
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PUB DATE 80
NOTE 563p.; Colored pages may not reproduce clearly.
EDRS PRICE MF02/PC23 Plus Postage.
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IDENTIFIERS *New Jersey Minimum Basic Skills Program

ABSTRACT

The Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review (CBSPR) is an essential part of the New Jersey public school evaluation and improvement process. This group of handbooks describes a process for analyzing existing school programs and practices in relation to those factors which have been identified through research to be associated with successful achievement in basic skills. Districts have the responsibility to use the results of the CBSPR to develop and implement basic skills improvement plans which appropriately fit their needs and resources. A school is selected to undergo a CBSPR if: (1) less than 65 percent of its students have met the statewide minimum standards on the Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) test in either reading, computation, or both; (2) there has not been a significantly increasing trend in the percent of students meeting the statewide standard; or (3) acceptable other evidence of pupil achievement has not been submitted by the district. Four groups involved in the CBSPR include the comprehensive review team, the local review team, the county office, and the school administrators and staff. The CBSPR handbooks deal specifically with each group's role and responsibilities, and provide guidelines for implementation at elementary and secondary levels. (EL)

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COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

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SUMMER, 1980

OVERVIEW

COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

OVERVIEW

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Summer, 1980

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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

"The goal of a thorough and efficient system of free public schools shall be to provide to all children in New Jersey, regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic location, the educational opportunity which will prepare them to function politically, economically and socially in a democratic society." (N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-4) It is my firm conviction that all children, with the possible exception of those with severe disabilities, can acquire these basic skills and leave school prepared to cope with the demands of adulthood. I believe this is a feasible goal even though we are far from achieving it at present. This goal is the motivation behind our continuing efforts to improve educational practice and ensure equal opportunity for all children.

As educators it is essential that we not lose sight of this goal, or be deterred by convenient arguments that factors beyond our control largely determine what and how much children learn. While some social scientists, unfortunately, have succeeded in persuading much of the public and many in the educational profession that schools cannot make a significant difference in the lives of children, there is a growing body of research that supports the contention that good schools can and do make a difference. We must make effective use of this knowledge about effective schools in our efforts to improve education in New Jersey.

The educational needs identified through the comprehensive basic skills program review described in this document are not just a local responsibility. The "Thorough and Efficient" legislation has mandated a state and local partnership to improve education. It is the role of the state to bring local

educators and citizens together to assist them in addressing their local educational goals and solving educational problems. In support of these local initiatives, the state must focus its own resources on the schools and districts with the most serious needs. When patterns of need are identified which cannot be resolved with existing resources, it is the responsibility of my office to bring these issues to the attention of the governor and legislature and to seek appropriate remedies.

Although the state and local districts share responsibility for this undertaking, successful efforts at educational improvement depend upon the commitment, leadership and energies of educators and citizens at the school and district level. The best solutions to local educational problems are usually those invented or adopted by the people closest to the situation. To assist such local efforts, the state has developed the comprehensive basic skills program review process. Ultimately, the local staff will implement any improvements in educational services and the degree of their success will depend upon their skill and the willingness of the public to support their efforts.

We all must work together to improve the educational opportunities open to our children. Only through understanding and cooperation will we realize the full benefits of this effort, and thereby move closer to our goal of preparing each youngster for adulthood.

Fred G. Burke
Commissioner

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The comprehensive review committee consisted of staff from the New Jersey State Department of Education (central and county offices), EIC-South and Research for Better Schools. The New Jersey Association of Secondary School Principals and Supervisors provided input concerning the high school review process.

Special thanks go to the many local educators who served on the pilot teams and to the staffs of Logan Township Public Schools, Paterson Public Schools, Elizabeth Public Schools, Perth Amboy Public Schools and Pleasantville Public Schools for their participation in field testing the process.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>Page</u>
Message from the Commissioner of Education.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	iii
I. Purpose of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Review Program.....	1
II. Schools Receiving a Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review.	2
III. The Comprehensive Review Process.....	2
IV. Group Roles and Responsibilities.....	3
The Comprehensive Review Team.....	4
The Local Review Team.....	6
The County Office and the School Program Coordinator.....	7
The School Administrators and Staff.....	8
V. Guidelines for the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review..	9
Development of Guidelines.....	9
District Policies and School Management Practices.....	11
Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations.....	12
The Basic Skills Program.....	13
Instructional Time.....	14
Parent/Community Relations.....	15
VI. Conducting the School Visit.....	15
VII. Comprehensive Review Team Findings and their Implications for Remediation.....	18
VIII. Technical Assistance Available.....	19
Appendix-Schedule of Significant Dates Related to the.....	19
Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process	
Bibliography.....	21

I. Purpose of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review

The comprehensive basic skills program review process is an essential part of the school evaluation, classification and improvement process. It is a process which brings together a team of educators to compare local basic skills programs against a set of standards derived from studies of effective schools.

The purpose of the comprehensive basic skills program review is twofold. First, it will provide a detailed diagnosis of problems related to achievement in basic skills. Second, the review will contain recommendations to assist the district and school in the development of a basic skills improvement plan.

A comprehensive basic skills program review is designed to analyze the existing school program and practices in relation to those factors which have been identified through research to be associated with successful achievement in basic skills. Research has shown that no single factor is associated with successful education; rather, it is a network of interlocking components. These factors include district policies and school management practices, staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations, basic skills program, instructional time, and parent/community relations. Therefore, the review team will take a broad look at school practices and not just at the formal basic skills program.

Through this structured review process, the New Jersey State Department of Education plans to provide districts with recommendations that have a high probability of leading to improvement in basic skills. It is the district's responsibility, however, to develop and implement a basic skills improvement plan which appropriately fits its needs and resources.

Classification of schools with deficiencies in the area of basic skills is based on the basic skills improvement, or remedial, plan submitted by the district and not on the comprehensive review team report.

II. Schools Receiving a Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review

A school will undergo a comprehensive basic skills program review if:

- . less than 65 percent of its students have met the statewide minimum standards on the Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) test in either reading or computation, or both, during the school year period from 1978 to 80; and
- . there has not been a significantly increasing trend in the percent of students meeting the statewide standard from 1978 to 1980; and
- . acceptable other evidence of pupil achievement has not been submitted by the district.

In 1980, reviews scheduled by the State Department of Education will be conducted from September 15 to December 1. Other schools may wish to use the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Guidelines to conduct self studies. Guidelines and implementation manuals will be made available to all districts in the state through the department.

III. The Comprehensive Review Process

Should a comprehensive basic skills program review be indicated, the county superintendent will select an external review team, the comprehensive review team, usually consisting of five members, including teachers and administrators. Members will be selected for their knowledge of schools and of basic skills, and will undergo a thorough training process prior to their school visitation.

Each school will be asked to appoint a local review team consisting of administrators, teachers and parents. The local review team will work directly with the external team to provide initial information concerning the areas to be analyzed.

Dates for the visit, and efficient time schedule will be arranged by the county superintendent's office in consultation with the principal. The county office will also assemble necessary school and district material with the assistance of both the school staff and the local review team. An explanation of the review process will be the responsibility of the county superintendent's office.

The comprehensive review team will spend approximately three days at the school interviewing staff, reviewing policies and materials, and observing educational practices. At the end of these three days, the team will assemble their findings and present orally its conclusions and recommendations to the local review team and to the school staff. Ten days later, the team's written report will be submitted to the district.

IV. Group Roles and Responsibilities

Four specific groups are involved in the comprehensive basic skills program review process. These groups include: (1) the comprehensive review team; (2) the local review team; (3) the county office; and (4) the school administrators and staff. A brief description of the roles and responsibilities of each group is provided below. A more detailed analysis of each group's role and responsibilities can be found in the handbooks specifically designated for each group.

The Comprehensive Review Team (CRT)

Comprehensive review team members are selected by the county superintendent for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive basic skills program review. This review will result in a list of recommendations which the local school may utilize in developing its remedial plan. A team will usually consist of five members, including a team leader, and will be typically composed of specialists (reading and math), a school administrator, an educational leader, and a parent representative and/or board member. An effort is made to relate team membership to the characteristics of the community that is being evaluated. For example, where a community has a large Hispanic population, the team membership should reflect this demographic fact and include members knowledgeable in the field of Hispanic educational affairs. General considerations for CRT selection are:

- . relevant professional experience
- . a record of association with successful practices
- . knowledge of New Jersey public schools
- . ability to review programs based on the department Guidelines and not on personal bias
- . interpersonal skills
- . communication skills

The team will be trained by the department in the review process.

Training will include:

- . an overview of the research related to effective schools
- . data gathering procedures
- . use of the comprehensive basic skills program review Guidelines and related reporting forms
- . scheduling and organizing the school visit

The factors to be reviewed by the team have been selected because research has identified them as related to school effectiveness in basic skills. The factors are grouped in the following areas: (1) district policies and school management practices; (2) staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations; (3) basic skills program; (4) instructional time; and (5) parent/community relations. The factors will be discussed in more detail later in this overview.

In addition to the training program, CRT members will be provided with informational materials pertinent to the comprehensive basic skills program review process, the guidelines for reviewing basic skills programs, and a set of school district data profiles. This background information should be read prior to the training session. During the actual visit the CRT is responsible for:

- . collecting information by reviewing written records, by interviewing, and through observation procedures
- . analyzing this information in relation to the research factors delineated in the Guidelines
- . drawing conclusions, verifying the existence of an educational problem in the district and explaining the nature of the problem
- . making recommendations to assist the school in developing its remedial plan
- . presenting its findings, conclusions and recommendations in oral exit conferences with the local review team and with the school administration and staff
- . preparing a written report of the school visit.

The Local Review Team (LRT)

The local review team is selected by the district to work with the comprehensive review team and to assist the school in developing the written remedial plan. The 5-10 members should consist of:

- . principal or vice principal
- . specialists (i.e., reading, math, guidance)
- . teachers
- . supervisors
- . parent/community representatives, board members and students (where appropriate)

The following chart shows the relationship between the local review team, the comprehensive review team, and the areas of program review:

<u>LRT</u> (10 people)	<u>CRT</u> (5 people)	<u>Assigned Areas of Program Review</u> (5 areas)
Principal & Vice Principal	Team Leader	District Policies & School Management Practices
Supervisor & Teacher	School Administrator	Staff Knowledge, Attitudes & Expectations
Reading Specialist & Teacher	Reading Specialist	Basic Skills Program (Reading) Instructional Time (Reading)
Mathematics Specialist & Teacher	Mathematics Specialist	Basic Skills Program (Math) Instructional Time (Math)
Parent/Community Representative, Board Member, & Student (where appropriate)	Parent/Community Representative or Board Member	Parent/Community Relations

The LRT is responsible for:

- . reading the comprehensive basic skills program review materials in advance of the site visit
- . providing preliminary information to the CRT
- . participating in a discussion of the CRT's findings
- . assisting the school district in translating the CRT's recommendations into a remedial plan

The County Office and the School Program Coordinator

The county office is the prime orchestrator and arranger of the comprehensive review process, and the county office's representative during the review process is the school program coordinator. This person, working in concert with the district superintendent and school principal, has responsibilities ranging from initiating the review process to disseminating the review team's final report. The school program coordinator is intimately involved in the initiation of the planning, and in the implementation phase of the comprehensive review process.

In the initiation stages, the school program coordinator participates in the review of the Minimum Basic Skills test data and other supporting information in order to determine whether a comprehensive basic skills program review is required. Should a review be indicated, the school program coordinator:

- . meets with the principal or district superintendent
- . arranges the dates of the visit to outline the comprehensive review process
- . prepares for the visit

Further, the coordinator, with the county superintendent, has the responsibility for identifying and structuring a comprehensive review team whose members will be compatible with the district and with each other. Before the visit occurs, the coordinator will participate in an orientation program for comprehensive review team members. Concurrently, he/she will assist the local review team, the principal and other district staff in the preparation of a district/school information packet and ensure that this packet is distributed to CRT members before the visit.

During the actual visitation the school program coordinator acts as a facilitator, ensuring the free flow of communications between the CRT members and representatives of the district, including LRT members. In addition, the coordinator ensures that team members focus on the research factors in their data gathering and helps to solve any problems that may arise. As the CRT drafts its final report, the coordinator will provide any necessary technical assistance. Finally, the school program coordinator is responsible for assuring that the CRT's final report is complete, typed and delivered to the district, state department central staff and the county office. The comprehensive basic skills program review materials and data will be maintained by the county office for future reference.

The School Administrators and Staff

School improvement is a building level phenomenon and the principal is the key to the successful preparation for and execution of the CRT visit. Responsibilities of the principal before and during the review include:

- . meeting with the school program coordinator to learn about the comprehensive basic skills program review process and to schedule the visit

- . participating in the selection of the local review team
- . meeting with the LRT and with school staff in order to explain the comprehensive basic skills program review process and enlist their support
- . scheduling conference and workroom space for the comprehensive review team
- . arranging for lunches at the school for CRT members
- . making staff available in accordance with the CRT's schedule of interviews and observations
- . providing relevant school data for CRT members
- . participating in a discussion of the results of the comprehensive program review
- . organizing a staff meeting for a presentation of the CRT's recommendations.

The school staff is also most important during the CRT visit. The school staff is responsible for assembling relevant data about the school and the students and for meeting and talking with the CRT members. Lastly, the staff will meet with the CRT to hear the its analyses and recommendations.

V. Guidelines for the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review

The factors used in the guidelines for the comprehensive review teams were derived from research showing relationships between the alterable aspects of a school's program and student performance in the basic skills. Literally, hundreds of research studies describing dozens of different factors have been reported in the research literature. Synthesizing these studies for use in this process was difficult because researchers use different labels to describe the same (or very similar) factors. Moreover, the research results

in some areas are contradictory or inconclusive. The materials, therefore, include only those factors and variables reported in the literature for which there appears to be consistent support. A bibliography of the research literature that was used to determine the factors can be found in the appendix.

In addition to research, the educational utility of the factors was considered in the selection process. That is, a second major criterion for including a factor was the utility of the concept for helping schools improve their educational programs. Educational utility is defined as consisting of three essential features: (1) reviewers and educators in the local school situation can understand the description of the factor and relate it to an aspect of the local educational program; (2) can analyze programs in terms of the factor and suggest possible avenues for improvement; and (3) such improvements should logically lead to increased student performance in the basic skills. Five pilot tests in local districts were conducted to ensure the educational utility of these factors and their associated indicators.

The comprehensive basic skills program review process involves the examination of these factors in a school through interviews with school staff, parents and students and through an analysis of relevant documents. The judgment of the reviewer obviously plays an important role in the review process. The process is designed to focus the reviewer's attention on specific aspects of the school's program that may need to be improved in order to increase student performance in the basic skills. The reviewer decides which methods to use to collect relevant information and uses professional judgment in reaching conclusions and making recommendations.

In the final analysis, considerable care should be taken to avoid over-emphasis on the importance of any single weakness discovered in the school's

program. Even schools with superior basic skills programs may find room for improvement in one area or another. Furthermore, a piecemeal effort to strengthen a particular problem area may have little or no effect on student learning. Significant improvements are more likely to result from a school-wide effort to strengthen the educational program in a number of areas.

The factors which have been identified as affecting student learning in basic skills are:

A. District Policies and School Management Practices

1. Basic Skills Policies - The district has well-defined policies in basic skills, the school has clearly stated improvement objectives, and there is evidence of school-wide commitment to improving basic skills instruction.
2. Discipline Policies - There is a minimal amount of disruption in the school. The school has a conduct code approved by the board of education with clear standards for behavior; it is communicated to all members of the school community; it is enforced by the school staff, and it is viewed as fair and consistently applied in all cases.
3. Staff Development Procedures - The school administration has a strong commitment to improving the skills of staff; staff development programs are planned and conducted in collaboration with the teaching staff, and inservice training programs are evaluated and revised over time.

4. Decision-Making Procedures - The school has established procedures for decision-making with reference to basic skills instruction (e.g., curriculum planning committees).

B. Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations

1. Teacher Knowledge of Instructional Content - The staff is knowledgeable about the structure and substance of the reading and mathematics content it is responsible for teaching.
2. Staff Attitudes Toward the Basic Skills Program - The staff agrees with the overall priority placed on basic skills instruction, the goals of the program and the content and methods used.
3. Principals' Attitudes Toward their Role - The principal places high priority on the role of instructional leadership and plays an active professional role in the basic skills programs of the school.
4. Staff Expectations About Student Learning - The administrators and teachers believe all students are capable of acquiring the basic skills, avoid the use of negative labels for students and use positive techniques (e.g., rewards and praise) to motivate students to learn.

C. The Basic Skills Program

1. The Reading and Mathematics Instructional Program

The planned and classroom implemented curriculum includes the following aligned and interrelated elements:

- . Expected outcomes - Sequenced skills arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels and are related to the standardized tests used in the district.
- . Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- . Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- . Record-keeping system - The student record-keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. Within a district where there is high mobility of students, the system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school.

2. Instructional management includes:

- . classroom teacher-managed instruction
- . strong direct leadership by teachers
- . flexible grouping of students based on assessed learner needs
- . positive methods of control
- . in-class compensatory education
- . lack of classroom disruption.

D. Instructional Time

1. Time in Basic Skills Instruction - The school allocates sufficient instructional time to the teaching of reading and mathematics. Student and teacher attendance provides for maximum basic skills instruction.
2. Classroom Instructional Time - Teachers apply effective strategies for organizing and managing the learning environment for the teaching of reading and mathematics.
3. Student Engaged Time - In reading and mathematics instruction, students spend a high proportion of their scheduled time actively engaged in academic work.

E. Parent/Community Relations

1. Parent/Community Relations and the Basic Skills Program - The school communicates with parents and community members about the basic skills program (e.g., student expectations, content of instruction, evaluation, reporting system) and, in addition, encourages parents to communicate with the school and become involved with their child's instructional program.
2. Parent/Community Relations and the Non-Instructional Processes
The administration and teachers communicate with the parents and community regarding school policies and practices and they encourage active participation of parents for the purpose of providing a safe, pleasant and effective learning environment. Parents are supportive of the school program.

VI. Conducting the School Visit

A school visit is normally scheduled for a three-day time period since pilot tests of this process suggest that three full days are needed to collect the information, analyze the data, and write the final report. Perhaps the most important consideration in assuring an effective visit is the preparation of a "tight" schedule of activities and serious efforts to complete all of the activities within the designated time periods.

A preliminary schedule for the visit will be prepared by the CRT in consultation with the school program coordinator and the school principal.

The schedule will vary from one school to another for a variety of practical reasons (e.g., administrators and staff will be available for interviews at different times, the scheduled activities in each school during the visit will require different types of arrangements). However, the main activities to be conducted by each CRT will be consistent from one school to another. A sample schedule of team activities is as follows:

Sample Schedule for Team Visit

FIRST DAY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
8:00 a.m.	CRT and county school program coordinator meet at the school to review schedule and other plans for visit.	Library
8:30 a.m.	Team leader directs a group interview with principal and superintendent about district policies, school management practices and school and district organization.	Library
10:00 a.m.	Principal conducts tour of school facility.	Library
10:30 a.m.	Each CRT member interviews LRT members to collect preliminary information in assigned areas.	Various Locations
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	CRT members continue to collect preliminary information from school staff through interviews, classroom observations, or other methods.	Various Locations
2:30 p.m.	CRT members meet to discuss preliminary findings and further data collection activities.	Library

SECOND DAY

8:00 a.m.	CRT members meet to coordinate data collection activities during the day.	Library
8:30 a.m.	A schedule for each CRT member's activities is prepared in consultation with the school principal.	Library
9:00 a.m.	CRT members collect additional information in each area to verify data already collected and to explore preliminary findings.	Various Locations
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Individual data collection activities.	Various Locations
2:30 p.m.	CRT members write tentative conclusions and recommendations in their assigned areas.	Library

THIRD DAY

8:00 a.m.	CRT members discuss their conclusions and recommendations, and outline the team report.	Library
10:30 a.m.	CRT members write their final reports. CRT leader writes the overall team report.	Library
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	CRT meets to review final reports and prepare oral presentation.	Library
2:00 p.m.	CRT leader and members orally present final report to LRT.	Library
3:00 p.m.	CRT leader and team members orally present final report to entire school staff.	Auditorium

VII. Comprehensive Basic Skills Program

Comprehensive Review Team Recommendations and their Implications for
Remediation

A final report will be sent to the district by the county superintendent within ten days of the visit. The report will identify strengths and weaknesses of the existing program and practices and will organize these findings according to the topics delineated in the Guidelines. Finally the CRT will make a series of recommendations for improvement in priority order.

The district itself is not obliged to follow all of the recommendations of the CRT in preparing a plan. However, any alternate strategies proposed by the district must be supported by a strong rationale, indicating how the proposed strategies will lead to improvement in basic skills achievement and explaining why particular recommendations were not incorporated into the plan.

All in all, the comprehensive basic skills program review process is a force for change. Although the state plays a significant role in this enterprise, further efforts at educational improvement will require the commitment, leadership and energies of educators and citizens at the school and district levels. The best solutions to local educational problems are those invented or adopted by the people closest to the situation. Ultimately improvements will be made by local individuals, and the degree of success achieved will depend on their skill and effort.

VIII. Technical Assistance Available

Although it will be incumbent upon the local districts and schools to develop and implement remedial plans, these local agencies can request help from other agencies. Such assistance can come from outside as well as inside the district. External resources available will include state and federal government funds as well as technical assistance from the department, Educational Improvement Centers, and public and private institutions of higher education. Internal assistance can come from the community, the school administration and staff, and the local review team. Thus local districts should have considerable support as they work to develop and implement their remedial plans based on the comprehensive basic skills program review.

APPENDIX

Schedule of Significant Dates Related to the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process

June 1, 1980	The department will provide MBS test data to local school districts.
July 15, 1980	Trend data for the MBS test will be provided by the department to the county offices for distribution to districts. The county superintendent will notify districts concerning schools subject to a comprehensive basic skills program review. Districts will be given until August 15 to submit evidence to rebut this analysis.

August 15, 1980 Rebuttal information due in county offices.

August 20, 1980 Comprehensive review teams selected and notified.

August 31, 1980 The commissioner will notify each chief school administrator and board president of the recommended classifications for their district and the schools therein and whether remedial plans are required.

September 15, 1980 Comprehensive basic skills program reviews will begin in identified schools.

December 1, 1980 All comprehensive basic skills program reviews will be completed.

January 15, 1981 In response to recommendations of comprehensive review team reports, and local assessment and planning activities, districts will submit remedial plans due on this date. Upon review and approval of the basic skills remedial plan, districts and schools will be classified and granted interim approval by the commissioner who will advise the state board of his actions.

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COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

SUMMER, 1980

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RELATED
TO SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

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Commissioner of Education

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Summer, 1980

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Acknowledgements.	i
Introduction.	1
District Policies and School Management Practices.	1
Staff, Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations.	3
Basic Skills Program.	5
Instructional Time.	8
Parent/Community Relations.	9
Bibliography.	13

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INTRODUCTION

This document provides the reader with a synthesis of the research identifying factors that contribute to the improvement of basic skills programs. These factors are derived from research results showing relationships between alterable aspect of a school's program and student performance in the basic skills. It consolidates information that is presented in more detail in the document entitled Guidelines For Reviewing Basic Skills Programs.

Educational research has undergone a major revolution in the past decade. The new research focus represents a shift from studying, what has been termed stable or static variables (e.g., socioeconomic status which includes parent education, occupation, and income) to examining variables that are alterable either before the teaching and learning processes or as part of these processes (e.g., encouragement of the child to learn and the ways in which time is utilized in the instructional program).

The preparation of this synthesis involved an analysis of hundreds of research studies. Ninety-one studies are cited in the document. The factors identified in this research review are organized into five groups: (1) district policies and school management practices; (2) staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations; (3) basic skills program; (4) instructional time; and (5) parent/community relations.

Research has shown that no single factor or group of factors is associated with effective education; rather, effective education is the result of an integrated set of practices in all of the areas cited above. Therefore, educators involved in school improvement efforts should take a broad look at school practices and not just at the formal basic skills program.

This document is the first attempt by the New Jersey Department of Education to structure existing knowledge in the highly complex area of school effects. It is expected that this synthesis of research will be revised over the coming years to reflect the results of new research findings as well as the experiences of educators and researchers who conduct field work in school settings.

District Policies and School Management Practices

A substantial body of research indicates that school policies and practices can influence student performance in the basic skills. Rutter, et al. (1979), for example, argue that the school staff can develop an environment where the norms and values of the school are communicated through clear and consistent expectations and appropriate models with feedback. These norms and values may in turn be translated into more formal statements of school policies and practices that influence student achievement. Some of the building climate or environmental factors that the researchers found are important in influencing student achievement are: academic emphasis, rewards and praise, discipline and punishment, staff organization, and student/teacher out-of-class interaction.

Similar results were reported by other researchers with reference to specific policies and procedures in the larger school environment. Brookover and Lezotte (1976) found that schools may impact student achievement by fostering a school-wide emphasis on the basic skills. They believe the school needs to have clearly stated improvement objectives in the basic skills which are understood and applied by the school staff. Moreover, their research suggests that all teachers in the school need to assume some responsibility for teaching the basic reading and math skills. Other researchers who reach similar conclusions include Carroll and Chall (1975), Holzman and Boes (1973) and Wilder (1977).

The importance of discipline policies and procedures is cited by a number of researchers (Kounin, 1977; Soar, 1973; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Coker, Loving and Coher, 1974; Bidwell, 1973; Evertson and Brophy, 1973; Moos, 1979). The general argument here is that it is possible to influence student achievement by fostering classroom environments that are organized and operated with a minimum amount of distraction, disruption, and confusion. To insure controlled classroom environments, discipline policies and procedures are needed which include clear specifications of expectations, standards for evaluating student behavior that are viewed as fair, and a consistent application of all rules for dealing with infractions.

Another factor that has received considerable attention in the research literature is school policies and procedures with reference to staff development. Schools can develop and implement staff training programs which address teacher needs and thereby impart skills that eventually influence student learning. Successful staff development appears to be influenced by the following factors: teachers are included in planning programs; demonstration, practice and feedback of concrete skills are emphasized; teachers play active roles in the training program; the training program is an active part of a continuous problem-solving or school improvement process; staff development is accompanied by on-going staff support from resource personnel; and, training is conducted during school time and at school expense. Support for the above assertions can be found in the work of Lawrence (1974), Ainsworth (1976), McLaughlin (1978), Lessor and Olson (1977) and Tolbert (1978).

The decision-making policies and patterns in a school setting can also affect student learning (Rutter, et al., 1979). The factors that appear significant in this case are: the decision-making patterns with reference to the basic skills instructional program, the extent to which decision-making in this area is centralized or shared, and the degree to which decisions are made in a structured manner. Some indications of effective decision-making patterns in the school might be: planning committees exist; a problem-solving orientation is taken toward decision-making; information about decisions is widely disseminated; and feedback on decisions is sought and used in future decision-making. Additional research to support these findings is cited by Benz (1975), Scott (1977) and in Putting Knowledge to Use (1976).

Summary of Variables

- A. Basic Skills Policies - The district has well defined policies in basic skills, the school has clearly stated improvement objectives* and school-wide commitment to improving basic skills instruction.
- B. Discipline Policies - There is a minimal amount of description in the school. The school has a discipline code approved by the board of education with clear standards for behavior; it is communicated to all members of the school community; it is enforced by the school staff; and, it is viewed as fair and consistently applied in all cases.
- C. Staff Development Policies - The school administration has a strong commitment to improving the skills of the staff; staff development programs are planned and conducted in collaboration with the teaching staff; and, in-service training programs are evaluated and revised over time.
- D. Decision-Making Policies - The school has formulated procedures for decision-making with reference to basic skills instruction; decision-making structures are established within the school (e.g., curriculum planning committees).

Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations

Researchers and educators have reasoned that what the school staff knows or feels or thinks may affect to some degree student learning of the basic skills. Centra and Potter (1977), however, point out that staff characteristics do not affect student learning directly. Knowledge, feelings or understandings tend to influence staff behavior which, in turn, may affect student learning of the basics. Thus, for example, knowledge of reading content and teaching techniques may influence a teacher's behavior in structuring the instructional program. In this sense, staff characteristics may have an indirect, but, nevertheless, important effect on student learning.

A variety of alterable staff characteristics of this kind has been identified by researchers as important contributors to student learning. A teacher's knowledge of the content area he or she is responsible for teaching is one factor. The rationale is that the teacher who knows reading or math content is better able to teach it to students (Bidwell and Kasarda, 1975; Goodman, 1959; Hanushek, 1970). Further evidence of the importance of teacher knowledge of content area comes from a study comparing high and low performing schools (Delaware Department of Public Instruction, 1977). A salient characteristic of the teachers in high performing schools is their knowledge of the structure and substance of the subject being taught.

*A distinction is made in this document between improvement objectives and instructional objectives. The improvement objectives referred to here are a school-wide set of objectives which define the desired improvement of the student body over a given period of time (e.g., the number of sixth grade students achieving the minimum standards on the MBS test will increase by 15% by 1981). Instructional objectives (discussed in another section) refer to a hierarchy of objectives in specific skill areas. These objectives guide daily instruction for individual students in the classroom.

The teacher's attitudes toward the nature and quality of the basic skills instructional program are another factor that may influence student learning. This factor might be defined as the extent of teacher agreement with the overall basic skills philosophy of the school, the goals of instruction, the instructional content and methods, and the measures of achievement. In effect, the underlying rationale is that student learning may be enhanced if the teacher's attitudes are positive toward the school's instructional policies and program requirements. Research supporting this factor is reported by the Delaware Department of Public Instruction (1977).

Teacher expectations about student learning are another characteristic that has received considerable attention in the research literature (Brophy and Good, 1972; Pigeon, 1970; Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968). The theory is that the teacher's expectations about student abilities to learn may affect the teacher's behavior in the classroom. As an example, teachers may direct most of their attention and provide most rewards to students they believe are fast learners (Rist, 1973). The research generally suggests that student learning will be enhanced if teachers assume all students are capable of mastering the basic skills instruction provided in the school. A related point is that teachers in high performing schools tend to avoid negative labeling of students and use positive rather than negative techniques to motivate students to learn (Medley, 1978; Harris and Serwer, 1966; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974).

The principal is typically a dominant force in the school environment, and his/her role in influencing student learning has captured the interest of researchers. Chester, et al. (1975) identify two different roles a principal might play: (a) an administrative role designed to achieve a smoothly running organization, and (b) a professional role concerned with improving classroom processes, encouraging teacher growth, and continually evaluating pupil learning. The professionally-oriented principal expresses more concern about instruction than administration, communicates views about instruction, assumes responsibility for instructional decisions, coordinates instructional programs, emphasizes academic standards, meets regularly with teachers to discuss classroom activities, acts as a disciplinarian, rates staff highly, and has positive perceptions of personal rapport with teachers, parents, and pupils. (Key, 1972; Wellisch, MacQueen, Carriere & Duck, 1978; Weber, 1971; State of New York, 1974; Edmonds, 1978; Brookover and Lezotte, 1977; Austin, 1979; Irvine, 1979). In short, all the above research indicates that professionally-oriented principals are more effective in increasing student achievement than principals who have other priorities, attitudes, and values.

Summary of Variables

- A. Teacher Knowledge of Instructional Content - The staff is knowledgeable about the structure and substance of the reading and math content they are responsible for teaching.
- B. Staff Attitudes Toward the Basic Skills Program - The staff agrees with the overall priority placed on basic skills instruction, the goals of the program, and the content and methods used.

- C. Principals' Attitudes Toward their Role - The principal places high priority on the role of instructional leadership and plays an active professional role in the basic skills program of the school.
- D. Staff Expectations About Student Learning - The administrators and teachers believe all students are capable of acquiring the basic skills, avoid the use of negative labels for students, and use positive techniques (e.g., rewards and praise) to motivate students to learn.

Basic Skills Program

Much research has been done concerning instruction in the basic skills. What emerges is a consistent pattern of findings that supports curriculum which include the following interrelated elements:

- 1. Expected outcomes - Sequenced skills arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels.
- 2. Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- 3. Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he/she has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- 4. Record keeping system - The student record keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. The system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school within the district where there is high mobility of students. (Cooley and Leinhardt, 1975; Harris and Serwer, 1966; Pigeon, 1970; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Education Programs that Work, USOE, 1978; Brophy and Evertson 1974; Tikunoff, Berliner and Rist, 1975; Bond and Dyskstra, 1967; Michigan State Department of Education, 1976; Edmonds, 1978; Bloom, 1980.)

Many programs incorporate these elements. Some of the most common labels include aligned curriculum, Right-to-Read, diagnostic/prescriptive, mastery learning, structured and continuous progress. There are hundreds of specific programs with these characteristics which research has shown to be effective. The major characteristic of these programs is the concept of taking the individual student through a sequenced set of learning outcomes at a rate consistent with his/her ability. The assumption is made that the student learns a higher level skill following mastery of a lower skill. This approach differs from grade level oriented programs which focus on the skills expected to be learned by the average student in a given grade.

Essential to the successful implementation of the curriculum component are the coordination and integration of instruction in basic skills both horizontally and vertically. The management design must draw together all personnel, materials and services (regardless of funding sources) in a uniform basic

skills effort across all grade levels. The management design focuses on a developmental program aimed at reducing the need for remediation. Remediation services (Title I, State Compensatory Education, volunteer services, child study teams, etc.) are closely coordinated with the developmental program. The classroom teacher is the manager of the child's program. All structural elements of the district's organization and all curricular components of the instructional program are centered on the primacy of the classroom teacher's role (Brinson, 1980).

The aligned curriculum approach does not require one-to-one instruction; however, it does require individualized planning and record keeping. Students may still be taught in groups, but frequent assessment of progress is used to regroup students based on current needs. The most effective grouping has the leader working with small groups of three to seven or large groups of eight or more in some situations. Children working alone, or with one or two other children plus the teacher, is negatively correlated with achievement (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1972-73; Soar, 1973).

The behavior exhibited by teachers forms the group rules by which instruction and interaction occur in the classroom. Research concludes that effective teachers provide strong leadership by directing activities in a businesslike way, as they manage the tasks and interactions of the classroom (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1972-73; Soar, 1973; Solomon and Kendall 1976). High achievement is more likely when teachers select the focus of the activities and apply appropriate principles of learning.

Achievement is lower in classes having a large amount of unsupervised seat work (Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Soar, 1973; and Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974). Moreover, effective teachers occupy the central role in the classroom and organize learning around questions which they pose. Inherent in management techniques of these teachers is the ability to maintain an intermediate position with respect to classroom control. Effective management in program improvement uses varied methods of control as opposed to a self-defeating management style based purely on criticism and rigidity (Soar, 1977). A well-managed classroom is one in which conditions for constructive rather than disruptive, deviate behavior prevail (Soar, 1973; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Bemis and Luft, 1970; Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976).

Another subject of study has been compensatory programs in basic skills. Schools have the option of serving the remedial needs of students in the regular classroom or in separate classes. In the regular classroom, the student to adult ratio is reduced, usually by adding a remedial teacher or aide for part of the day. However, some schools schedule those students not needing remediation, for other activities during the school day, leaving the regular classroom teacher with fewer students for remediation.

The other option for remediation is the use of "pull-out." Students in need of remediation are sent to separate remedial classes for part of the day. Research has shown that "pull-out" as a method of remediation results in the negative labeling of many students. Teachers view these students as less capable and, consequently, lower their expectations for them. Lower teacher expectations, therefore, result in lower levels of student achievement. Another problem with "pull-out" is the frequent lack of coordination of

teaching strategies - between the teacher and the special teacher - for the child's basic skills improvement plan. This results, then, in the student spending less time on tasks designed to correct basic skills deficiencies. Further, there is a consistent negative relationship between the time pupils spend in "pull-out" classes and reading and mathematics achievement (Glass and Smith, 1979).

Summary of Variables

A. The Developmental Instructional Program

The planned and classroom implemented curriculum includes the following aligned and interrelated elements:

- . Expected outcomes - Sequenced skills arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels and are related to the standardized tests used in the district.
- . Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- . Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- . Record-keeping system - The student record-keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. Within a district where there is high mobility of students, the system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school.

B. Compensatory Instruction

- . Supports the developmental program
- . If remediation takes place through "pull-out" the negative effects are minimized
- . If remediation takes place in the classroom, provision is made for adequate services for all students needing remediation

C. Instructional management includes:

- . classroom teacher-managed instruction
- . strong direct leadership by teachers
- . flexible grouping of students based on assessed learner needs
- . positive methods of control
- . in-class compensatory education
- . lack of classroom disruption

Instructional Time

Most educators would agree that children who spend more time in learning-related activities tend to learn more. However, time is often not treated as a resource that can be manipulated to improve student learning, as educators tend to think of time as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for learning. That is, they generally feel that it is not only the quantity but also the quality of time spent in a learning situation that determines a student's progress.

Recent research has begun to focus attention on both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the time concept. So, the literature in this area is beginning to offer guidance to schools not only about the importance of how much time is made available for student learning, but also about more effective ways to use time (LeCompet, 1979). The pervasive influence of time on student achievement is developed in a model of "Individual Instructional Exposure and Achievement" (Wiley and Harnischfeger, 1974). For example, the overall importance of time-to-learn has been repeatedly emphasized by Bloom (1980) and Carroll (1963). Also, a number of studies have shown significant correlations between student learning and the following variables: a longer school day (Bond and Dykstra, 1967); number of days of student and teacher absence (Rosenshine, 1971); average number of hours of schooling (Wiley and Harnischfeger, 1974); amount of time spent on academic activities (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974); and student engaged time (Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study, 1978). Moreover, the importance of active engagement on the part of both teachers and students in the instructional process is often emphasized.

The Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study or BTES study (Phase III, 1978) developed a model of instructional processes which focused on reading and mathematics instruction at the elementary school level. This classroom model acknowledges the common sense view that, for a given student, certain instructional processes lead to student classroom learning which is then reflected in achievement test scores. An analysis of the research suggests that improved student learning results from increasing the amount of time in a school day, or from assigning more time to instruction in a particular subject area. However, the most important consideration might be to take steps to ensure that teachers spend more time on instruction-related activities. Teacher time-on-task may be increased by achieving better classroom control, or improved organization of instruction, or by more effective use of instruction materials. In this sense, time may be a concept that cuts across many of the variables to be considered in the school effectiveness research.

Summary of Variables

- A. Time in Basic Skills Instruction - The school allocates sufficient instructional time to the teaching of reading and math and, when necessary, increases this time to provide for additional instruction. Student and teacher attendance provides for maximum basic skills instruction.
- B. Classroom Instructional Time - Teachers use the time allocated to the teaching of reading and math by applying effective strategies for organizing and managing the learning environment.

- C. Student Engaged Time - In reading and math instruction, students spend a high proportion of their time engaged in academic work.

Parent/Community Relations

"The family is the central, most important long lasting learning institution a child experiences" (Gordon, 1979). Research justifies this statement by indicating that parental involvement in the educational process can greatly enhance a child's prospects for academic success (Bronfenbrenner, 1978; Bloom, 1980; Clark, Lotto and McCarthy, 1980). According to Gordon (1979), parents can interact with the educational system as (1) teachers of their own children, (2) adult learners of new skills, (3) volunteers in the classroom, (4) paid para-professionals, and (5) decision-makers and policy advisors.

When the parent acts as tutor in the home, research indicates that benefits accrue to all the children in the home as well as to the parent-tutor (Olmsted, 1979; Gordon, 1979). Home tutoring positively affects a child's language development, his/her general aptitude for learning and his/her motivation to learn in school (Bloom, 1980; Bronfenbrenner, 1978). Further, when parents are involved as teachers of their own children a number of possible benefits occur, including increased parent/child transaction, increased home/school understanding, and conceivable cost benefits to the overall institutional effort (Harrison & Wilkinson, 1978; Gordon, 1979; Rich, Van Dien and Maltot, 1979).

Research indicates that when parents work as a para-professional or classroom volunteer they gain a sense of self-sufficiency and self-confidence. These roles have included professional training and have often allowed opportunities for advancement. Para-professional and volunteer work also impact on the system, affecting the school in terms of manpower, public relations, policy alignment and general family services (medical and such) (True, 1979; Gordon, 1979).

For the role of the parent as a decision-maker to function optimally, schools and administrators must be cognizant of the social, political, economic and educational factors concerning the parent body (True, 1979). Parents as decision-makers can function on three levels (1) the individual level (choice of school, teachers, etc.), (2) school level (e.g., PTA involvement), and (3) community level (as board member, citizen advisory or parent advocate) (Davies, Burges, Hirsch, Hirsch, Hugenin, Upton, and Zerchykov, 1979; True, 1979). When parents feel their input and involvement has a meaning, they are more likely to participate in the system.

All programs involving parents and the community ought to be part of a larger school-wide plan. The school should identify parent/community goals, as well as identify strategies for enlisting parents and mobilizing the resources of the home. In successful parent participation programs, roles are clearly identified and the school has devised methods of evaluation (Davies, et al. 1979; Hugenin, et al. 1979).

Because parent and community involvement essentially can impact heavily on the total educational scheme, it is incumbent on schools to encourage and to facilitate this interaction. Rich, et al. (1979) and Rutter (1979) have identified some means by which principals and teachers can involve parents.

They can:

- . raise consciousness about the home and community as the key to student achievement; publicize and support ideas, materials and strategies that promote this belief
- . encourage student, parent, and teacher projects in the community
- . recognize that parents are a significant force in their child's education; search for ways to involve parents as educational partners
- . show parents in a variety of ways that they care for them and their children; inform parents regularly of what is happening in school on a regular basis; offer a variety of school-parent programs and materials designed to build the home/school/community educational partnership
- . encourage parents to visit the school, confer with school staff regularly and to use the school as a source for help and referral to community agencies
- . teach parents how they can help their children at home; provide home learning tips on how to supplement the work of the school
- . utilize effectively the contribution of parents' skills, insights, talents and concerns to the educational process
- . use the resources of the home for materials and ideas for different subject areas
- . adapt successful program practices from the preschool and elementary levels to the needs of older students and their families
- . set up a functional design for operating a parent advisory council at the school; combine specific tasks and advisory functions as a focus for positive parental efforts.

Essentially, the efforts of teachers and administrators should be directed at reducing the divergency between parents and educators. When the home and the school have congruent learning emphases, the child has little difficulty in his later school learning (Bloom, 1980), and the child's attitudes and achievement level are likely to be enhanced.

Citizens and educators are recognizing that improvement in the schools and community support for education occurs only when schools and communities are open to each other and when the educational consumer (student, parent and community member) has a strong, honest part in setting policy and making decisions (National Institute of Education, 1978; U.S. Office of Education, 1979; Davies, 1976).

Above all, parents want safe schools. The most recent Gallup Poll on public attitudes toward education ranked discipline as the number one concern of parents. For the past decade, the use of alcohol and drugs has continued, for

the past decade, to assume a priority in the public's concern about public schools. Crime and vandalism, in the latest survey, received sufficient mentions to place it among the top 10 major problems (Elam, 1978). Research indicates that where violence levels are high, teaching and learning are negatively affected by a school climate that is dominated by fear (National Institute of Education, 1978).

The Safe School Study Report (National Institute of Education, 1978) cited community-school relations as a factor in the incidence of school crime and misbehavior. Schools having good relationships with the surrounding communities tend to have less of a problem. The more support a school receives from parents, community agencies, police, the board of education and other sources, the safer the school will be (National Institute of Education, 1978).

Progress in education is more likely to occur within the context of collaborative partnership involving the home, school, community and municipality (National Institute of Education, 1978; U.S. Office of Education, 1979).

Summary of Variables

- A. Parent/Community Relations and the Basic Skills Program - The school communicates with parents and community members about the basic skills program (e.g., student expectations, content of instruction, evaluation, reporting system) and also encourages parents to communicate with the school and become involved with the instructional program.
- B. Parent/Community Relations and the Non-Instructional Processes - The administration and teachers communicate with the parents and community regarding school policies and practices, and they encourage active participation of parents for the purpose of providing a safe, pleasant and effective learning environment.

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COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS

SUMMER, 1980

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR REVIEW

TEAM MEMBERS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	1
I. Preparing for a Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review . . .	1
Studying the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Materials	2
Participating in the Training Program	6
II. Conducting the School Visit	10
Collecting and Analyzing Information.	10
Preparing and Presenting the Final Report	14
 Appendix A: A Sample Training Program Agenda for Comprehensive Review Teams	19
 Appendix B: Sample Schedule for a Team Visit	22

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS

Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review (CBSPR) is an essential part of the overall evaluation and improvement process called "Thorough and Efficient" (T&E) education. The review is conducted by teams of experienced educators and knowledgeable community persons who are asked to go into selected schools in order to compare the local basic skills programs with a set of standards derived from studies of effective schools. The purpose of a program review is two-fold: (1) to analyze the strengths and the weaknesses of an individual school's basic skills program according to research guidelines, and (2) to provide a set of recommendations to the school for program improvements that have strong potential for increasing the basic skills performance of students. These recommendations are designed for use by schools in developing their own basic skills improvement plan.

This procedural guide was developed by the department to both aid in the individual reviews and to help ensure a consistent standards of quality throughout the statewide review process. It is specifically addressed to those people who are serving as reviewers on a comprehensive review team. The document is divided into two major sections. The first section details the tasks to be followed in preparing for a comprehensive basic skills program review and the second section focuses on conducting the review.

I. PREPARING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

Preparation for a comprehensive basic skills program review involves two major tasks. A team member needs to study the written materials to be utilized in the review and to participate in training sessions conducted by the New Jersey State Department of Education.

Studying the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Materials

When a person agrees to serve on a comprehensive review team (CRT), he or she will receive a package of materials to be used in the review process. Specifically the package will include: (1) An Overview of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process; (2) A Procedural Guide for Program Reviewers (i.e., the present document); (3) Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs; (4) Report Forms; and (5) School Descriptive Information. Preparation for training essentially involves careful study of these documents by each member of the review team, and identification of questions and issues requiring later clarification at the training session.* The following is a brief description of the nature of each document and its function in the overall review process.

An Overview of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process

The purpose of this document is to provide reviewers with an initial understanding of the overall review process and how the process fits into the framework of T&E legislation. Also, the overview offers general information concerning the roles and responsibilities of the different state, county, and local groups involved in each stage of the review. Finally, the document contains a schedule of dates relative to the review process and a bibliography of all the research studies that were used in developing the materials used in the process.

*Should a team member wish additional information on the "T&E" evaluation and classification process or on the roles and responsibilities of the various other groups involved in the process, the county office staff will be able to supply additional documents discussing these topics.

Procedural Guide for Program Reviewers

The present document is designed to provide reviewers with a guide to tasks to be performed during the comprehensive basic skills program review process. Each reviewer should study the procedural guide as soon as possible in order to gain an understanding of the process and to develop a list of issues to be discussed in the forthcoming training program.

It is important, however, to recognize that neither the procedural guide nor the training program can provide reviewers with detailed step-by-step directions about how to conduct a program review. Stated another way, the reviewer needs to use a considerable amount of professional expertise and judgment in order to adjust the process to meet the specific problems and conditions in a particular school situation.

Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs

The guidelines are designed to provide reviewers with a research based structure for collecting and reporting relevant data concerning a school's basic skills program. There are separate guidelines for use in elementary and secondary schools. Appropriate use of the guidelines by reviewers is vital to ensure consistency across the different comprehensive review teams who are analyzing basic skills programs in schools throughout the state. Five major areas of a school's basic skills program are covered in this document:

- . District policies and school management practices
- . Staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations
- . Basic skills program
- . Instructional time
- . Parent and community relations

A number of factors under each area are identified and explained. In addition, the reviewer is provided with a short outline of suggested procedures and sources of information to be considered in analyzing each factor. To further structure data collection with reference to each factor, specific indicators of important aspects of the overall factor are noted, and space for reviewer comments is provided beside these indicators. Finally, space is provided in the guidelines for reviewers to draw conclusions from the data they have collected with reference to each factor and to make recommendations. An illustration of the materials to be used in analyzing one factor is provided in Appendix A.

The purpose, nature, and use of the guidelines is described in detail in the introductory section of the document itself. Since this is the basic instrument to be used in the comprehensive review process, each reviewer should carefully study its contents and note any questions or problems that require further clarification or discussion in the training program.

While the entire document deserves detailed study, each reviewer should pay particular attention to the areas he or she will be reviewing. The overall composition of a typical team and their areas of responsibility are indicated below:*

Team Members

Chairman

School Administrator

Reading Specialist/Teacher

Assigned Area(s)

District policies and school management practices

Staff knowledge, attitudes, and expectations

Basic skills program (reading) -
Instructional time (reading)

* Variations in the composition of a team may be needed in some school situations due to the size of the school or to the number of subject areas to be reviewed (i.e., reading or mathematics or both).

Team Members

Math Specialist/Teacher

School Administrator
or Community PersonAssigned Area(s)Basic skills program (math) -
Instructional time (math)

Parent-community relations

As each reviewer studies his or her assigned area, it is particularly important to gain a clear understanding of the research base that supports the selection of factors. Each factor and its associated indicators were derived from research results showing relationships between these alterable characteristics of a school's program and student performance in the basic skills. The relevant research in each area is briefly reviewed in the guidelines to help the reviewer understand how these factors are defined and why they were selected as possible targets for improvement. Reviewers might also consider reading the studies cited in the research reviews. Many of the studies can be found in a large educational library. A complete set of all documents cited in the guidelines is also available at the New Jersey State Department of Education in Trenton.

Report Forms

The Report Forms provide a vehicle for organizing and communicating the team's conclusions and recommendations concerning a school's basic skills program. In essence, this document consists of forms to be used by the review team as they summarize their findings.

Most of the forms provided here are also contained in the Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs. The forms in the guidelines are used by the reviewer to organize a preliminary set of conclusions and recommendations. The identical pages in the Report Forms are used to record a final set of conclusions and recommendations. Specific information about how to complete these forms is provided in a later section of this document.

School Descriptive Information

Each team will be assigned responsibility for reviewing the basic skills program in a particular school. Descriptive information about the school to be visited will be included in the package sent to each reviewer. Additional information about the school will be given in both oral and written form during and after the training session.

The descriptive information sent to each reviewer will vary somewhat from one school to another. However, most reviewers will receive: (a) demographic information (e.g., size, grade levels, racial composition); (b) test score information (e.g., Minimum Basic Skills test results, local test scores); (c) monitoring reports on the school's basic skills program prepared by the school program coordinator; (d) information about the school's curriculum and instructional program; and (e) any other relevant descriptive material (e.g., background on the community).

The reviewer should study these materials with a view toward developing an understanding of the school's context, its needs, and its educational program. The constraints and opportunities for school improvement that exist in the school's environment might also be noted. The reviewer should be prepared to raise questions about the school (or to request additional information) during the training program.

Participating in the Training Program

Reviewers must participate in a one-day training program to be held about two weeks in advance of the school visit. The purpose of the training program is to provide background and knowledge required to conduct an effective comprehensive basic skills program review. Reviewers will also meet as a team to organize their visit and to get first hand information about the school from the school program coordinator.

The training program will be attended by persons from a number of different review teams, and will include both general sessions and some small group meetings. There will also be a special session for team leaders, geared to familiarizing them with the additional responsibilities of their position. A possible agenda for a training program is shown in Appendix A and discussed on the following page.

Introduction to Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review

This session is divided into three parts. The first part, an overview of the T&E evaluation process, is designed to help reviewers understand how their activity fits within the larger structure of "Thorough and Efficient" education, and how the materials were developed within this context. The second and third parts focus on the purpose of a comprehensive basic skills program review and on an overview of the process itself. This session, then, is aimed at providing some important background information for the reviewers.

Group Roles and Responsibilities

Involved in the comprehensive review process are school program coordinators, a local review team, district superintendents, school boards, school administration and staff, as well as the review team and its leader. This session outlines the roles and responsibilities of each team member as well as the functions of the numerous other people involved.

Discussion of Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Materials

The package of materials sent to reviewers in advance of this meeting (i.e., the materials described in the previous section) will be discussed during this session. All of the materials provided in the package will be reviewed. Special emphasis will be placed on the Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs and the Report Forms. Time will be scheduled for discussion of any questions the reviewers may have about the materials.

Activities of the Comprehensive Review Team

The first part of this session will outline the activities of the comprehensive review team as they conduct a school visit. The second part will consist of comments and reports by a panel of people who served as reviewers in the pilot phase of the development of this process. The panel will also answer any questions prospective reviewers might have.

Techniques for Collecting and Reporting on Relevant Program Information

This session is designed to provide reviewers with basic information about techniques they might use in collecting, analyzing, and reporting information in an efficient manner. Emphasis will be placed on using materials productively, on interviewing techniques in individual and group situations, and on writing final reports in a manner appropriate for use by the local school as they develop a remedial plan.

Working with the Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs: Skill Area Meetings

Five simultaneous training sessions will be conducted involving reviewers from different comprehensive review teams who are assigned to a particular area (e.g., district policies and school management practices). Emphasis will be on an in-depth study of the research findings in the area, the factors to be examined in the review, and the questions to be asked of the school staff.

Site Team Meetings

This session is designed to bring together the people who will be involved in a particular school (i.e., the comprehensive program review team and the school program coordinator). Two topics are scheduled for discussion. First, the team members will discuss the school situation with the coordinators. The team members might want to raise questions about the descriptive information they received earlier or to ask for additional information about the school. The school program coordinator may have additional descriptive information about the school to distribute at this time. Second, the team members and the coordinator need to develop a schedule for the team's visit. (A sample schedule of activities, discussed later in this document, might be used as a guide to the development of this preliminary schedule.) Although this schedule may be modified somewhat before the visit, it is very important for the team and the coordinator to establish a sequence of activities so the necessary arrangements for these activities can be made at the local school level.

Questions and Group Discussion

The small group meetings may generate additional questions or issues that need to be discussed by the entire group before adjournment. Such discussion is scheduled for this time period.

Team Leader's Meeting

After the training session, time will be allotted for a meeting of team leaders. The purpose of the session will be to focus on additional organizational and leadership functions of the team leader and on responding to any questions he or she might have regarding the role to be played.

This phase of activity is completed at the conclusion of the training program. No further contact is scheduled among team members (or between the team and the local school staff) until the school visit. However, team members should feel free to contact their team leader to discuss questions or problems that might arise before the school visit.

II. CONDUCTING THE SCHOOL VISIT

Team members typically have three days in which to conduct a review of a school's basic skills program. The timing of activities during these three days will vary from one school to another; nevertheless, the activities themselves should remain constant. A sample schedule of activities during a team visit is provided in Appendix B.

Generally speaking, during the initial two days a team will focus on activities that require the collection and analysis of information, and will work primarily with the Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs.

During the last day, the major activities of a team consist of preparing a final report and presenting the report to the local review team and school staff. The Report Forms are used in this stage. Both levels of activity are described below.

Collecting and Analyzing Information

Information collection and analysis techniques are used continuously during the first two days of the visit, although occasionally team members will need to collect or analyze some additional data on the last day. Despite the close relationship between information collection and analysis, these activities are discussed separately in the following pages.

Collecting Information

The task of interviewing begins shortly after arrival at the school site on the first day. The comprehensive review team will have met earlier (around 8:00 a.m.) with the school program coordinator to review the plans for the visit; discuss any school rules or restrictions that team members need to observe; and obtain floor plans, organizational charts, faculty lists and other school data. After this short session, the team leader, in conjunction with all comprehensive review team members, will conduct a group interview with the school's administrative staff (e.g., school principal and district superintendent) about district policies and school management practices. The team chairman should plan and provide leadership for the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is for the team to get an overview of the policies and organization of the school and district. The chairman should use the "District Policies and School Management Practices" section of the guidelines as a basis for developing questions for this meeting. An organizational chart of the district may also help to guide the team in developing questions.

Following a tour of the facility conducted by the school principal, each team member will begin collecting specific information by interviewing their counterparts on the local review team (LRT).

The LRT has been selected by the administration based on their knowledge of the specific areas to be reviewed by the CRT. These individuals provide an initial response concerning the school's programs and practices as they relate to the factors. For each CRT area the district has selected two or more local educators or community members. In addition to providing initial information to the team, it is recommended that the LRT play a role in developing the remedial plan for the school.

Example of LRT Composition

<u>Areas</u>	<u>Local Review Team</u>
District policies and school management practices	School Principal and District Superintendent
Staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations	Administrator and Teacher
Program/time (reading)	Reading Supervisor and Reading Teacher
Program/time (math)	Math Supervisors and Math Teacher
Parent and community	School Board Member, Parent and Student (where appropriate)

All schools may not be able to release all LRT members at the same time. If this is the case, the CRT will have to schedule these interviews throughout the first day.

The CRT members should follow the guidelines in interviewing the LRT members and make notes related to each indicator. These are preliminary notes to guide the team member in collecting other data.

Following the meetings with the LRT members each CRT member plans their own data collection procedures. Suggestions are given in the guidelines under each factor concerning procedures to follow and sources of information. In planning the rest of the day one and all of day two team members must do both individual and group planning. For example, several team members may want to interview a particular member of the central office staff requiring coordination of the interview schedule. It is also important that all teachers of basic skills have at least some contact with the team. It will take team coordination to accomplish this contact. In observing classrooms it is important to be as unobtrusive as possible; therefore, several team members should not visit the same classroom together.

Another technique for gathering information is through document reviews. Each section of the guidelines outlines specific materials that might be reviewed by team members. These materials include texts, curriculum guides, teacher gradebooks, report forms, lesson plans, as well as supplemental materials. Also, team members should seek out other documents pertinent to the factors in the guidelines, such as school policy statements, discipline codes, student handbooks, and the like. Examination of these materials will support conclusions drawn from other informational sources.

Analyzing Information

Information analysis and synthesis are largely individual processes, but these processes can be facilitated by group discussion. A major function of the team leader is to organize group meetings at the beginning and at the end of each day. The purposes of these meetings are not only to coordinate the day's schedules and to resolve procedural questions, but also to discuss impressions team members have developed about the school and its programs, trends that seem to be emerging, and hypotheses about areas of needed improvement. Furthermore, at these sessions team members can outline plans for testing the validity of their hypotheses through the collection of additional data.

Ultimately, each team member has to draw his or her conclusions from the data collected and make recommendations. Conclusions should reflect the judgment of the team member and not simply restate the facts. The recommendations should proceed logically from the conclusions and reflect the perspective of the guidelines. Reviewers should prepare a tentative set of conclusions and recommendations for their area as soon as possible in order to facilitate the writing of the final report. Upon completing this draft, data

collection and initial analysis are at an end and the team is ready to begin assembling the final report.

Preparing and Presenting the Final Report

On the third day of the school visit, the review team's activities will shift from the collection and analysis of information to the preparation and presentation of the final report. Directions for performing the activities during this second phase of the school visit are provided in the following pages.

Preparing the Final Report

At the beginning of the third day, the team leader normally calls a team meeting to discuss the tentative conclusions and recommendations reached by each team member. At this time, the team also prepares an outline for the content to be included in the "General Comments" section of the final report, and the "Team's Major Recommendations for Improvement in Priority Order."

At the end of the meeting, team members will separate to write their individual reports for a particular area. The team leader will write the "General Comments" and "Major Recommendations" as well as the report for the "district policies and school management practices" area. When the rough drafts are completed, team members will reassemble to review and comment on the reports before they are presented to the school staff. Some guidelines for preparing each section of the final report are presented below.

General Comments. The aim of this introductory section of the final report is to establish the overall context and tone for the rest of the report. The comments should address each of the major areas reviewed by the

team (e.g., district policies) and outline specific findings and trends in these areas. This discussion should emphasize areas where the school is performing effectively as well as those areas that need improvement. Also included among the comments should be an acknowledgement of the support provided by school and district personnel. These written comments can serve as an introduction to the oral presentation to the local review team and school staff discussed in the following section and to the introduction in the final written report.

Major Recommendations for Improvement. This section identifies the elements of the school's programs that are most in need of improvement and suggests possible courses of action. These recommendations should be specific and clearly and concisely stated, and should be a synthesis of the more detailed recommendations for each factor discussed below. Recommendations should be organized under the six major area headings contained in the guidelines. Each section should be further divided into short (less than 18 months) and long term (more than 18 months) recommendations. These recommendations will serve as the basis for the school's remedial plan. In order to be useful to the district the recommendations should be very specific. Districts will be given the option of accepting these recommendations and incorporating them directly into their remedial plan.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Each Factor. This activity essentially involves putting the team's conclusions and recommendations about each factor into final form. Team members should review their comments, conclusions, and recommendations and prepare a final report on each factor using the appropriate pages in the Report Forms. Again, it is important to

emphasize that these conclusions should not be a simple restatement of facts but rather an expression of the overall opinion of the reviewer about the quality of the program in this area.

When all of these reports have been written, the team is prepared to make its presentations to the local school staff. Generally speaking a good final report has the following qualities:

- . It is consistent throughout. All the different parts blend together in a logical fashion.
- . It is organized around the areas and factors outlined in the Guidelines.
- . It is written in a specific, clear and concise fashion that can be understood by different groups within the school community.
- . It is comprehensive, incorporating school data gleaned from interviews, observations and document reviews.
- . It contains specific long and short term recommendations that can be translated into action by the school.

Presentation of the Final Report

At the end of the third day, the team makes two separate presentations of their findings: first to the administrators and/or local review team and then to the entire school staff. The structure of the presentations may vary from school to school. In some situations, an oral presentation of the findings specified in the report may involve an informal discussion with a question and answer period. In other situations, the presentation may be more formal. In any case, team members should make note of the different groups to whom they are talking and address their comments appropriately.

All members of the comprehensive review team should participate in the oral presentations of the report. The team leader might summarize the general comments of the team. Each team member can then give a brief review of the findings in their area. Finally, the team leader might present the overall conclusions and recommendations.

Comments should emphasize positive aspects of the school's program as well as areas needing improvement. They should be designed to enlist local support for the improvement effort as well as to give an accurate picture of the tasks that need to be undertaken by the school. Lastly, the comments should accurately mirror the written material that will be included in the completed final report that the district will receive.

At the end of the school visit, the team leader should have in hand the final reports of each team member and the total report should be given to the school program coordinator for typing. The final report will be given to the district within ten days.

At this point, the work of the comprehensive review team is completed but the improvement task has only just begun. The school will analyze the report and use it as a basis for developing a plan to up-grade their basic skills program. Ultimately, the work of the comprehensive review team may be realized in the form of increased learning of the basic skills by all students in the school.

APPENDIX A

A SAMPLE TRAINING PROGRAM AGENDA
FOR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TEAMS

TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TEAM

GENERAL SESSION

Introduction to Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review

- . Overview of T&E Evaluation Process
- . Purpose of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review
- . Overview of the Comprehensive Review Process

Group Roles and Responsibilities

- . Comprehensive Review Team and Team Leader
- . Local Review Team and District Staff
- . County Office and School Program Coordinator

Discussion of Review Materials

- . Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs
- . Report Forms

Activities of the Comprehensive Review Team

- . Conducting the School Visit
- . Comprehensive Review Team Panel Reports

TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW TEAM

Techniques for Collecting and Reporting on Relevant Program Information

- . Use of Materials and Data on District
- . Interview Techniques
- . Writing Final Reports

GROUP LUNCH

SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

Working with the Guidelines: Skill Area Meetings

- . District Policies and School Management Practices
- . Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations
- . Basic Skills Program/Instructional Time/Reading
- . Basic Skills Program/Instructional Time/Math
- . Parent and Community Relations

On-Site Team Meetings (Comprehensive Review Team, School Program Coordinator)

- . Discussion of School Situation
- . Organization of School Visit

GENERAL SESSION

Questions and Group Discussion

TEAM LEADERS' MEETING

APPE

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR TEAM VISIT

Sample Schedule for Team Visit

FIRST DAY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
8:00 a.m.	Comprehensive Review Team and school program coordinator meet at school to review schedule and other plans for visit.	Library
8:30 a.m.	Team Leader (and other team members) conduct group interview with principal and superintendent about "District Policies and School Management Practices".	Library
10:00 a.m.	Principal conducts tour of school facility.	
10:30 a.m.	Each Comprehensive Review Team member interviews a counterpart Local Review Team member to collect preliminary information in assigned areas.	Designated Offices
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Team members continue to collect preliminary information from school staff through interviews, classroom observation, or other methods.	
2:30 p.m.	Team members meet to discuss preliminary findings and further data collection activities.	Library

SECOND DAY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
8:00 a.m.	Team members meet to coordinate data collection activities during the day.	Library
8:30 a.m.	A schedule for each team member's activities is prepared in consultation with the school principal.	Library
9:00 a.m.	Team members collect additional information in each area to verify data already collected and to explore preliminary findings.	Various Locations
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Individual data collection activities.	Various Locations
2:30 p.m.	Team members write tentative "conclusions and recommendations" in their assigned areas.	Library

THIRD DAY

8:00 a.m.	Team members meet to discuss their conclusions and recommendations, and to outline the team report.	Library
10:30 a.m.	Team members write their final reports. Team Leader writes the overall team report.	Library
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Team meets to review final reports and prepare oral presentation.	Library
2:00 p.m.	Team leader and team members present final report in oral form to the local review team.	Library
3:00 p.m.	Team leader and team members give oral report of findings to entire school staff.	Auditorium



COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

SUMMER, 1980

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR
SCHOOL STAFF

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR SCHOOL STAFF

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PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR SCHOOL STAFF

This document outlines the procedures to be followed by schools which are scheduled for a comprehensive basic skills program review. It consists of three sections: Overview of Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process, Responsibilities and Activities of School Staff, and Preparation of a Remedial Plan.

Overview of Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process

A comprehensive review of the basic skills program and related school factors is intended to provide a school and district with a detailed diagnosis of problems related to achievement of students in the basic skills. A Comprehensive Review Team (CRT) will make recommendations to assist the district and school to develop a remedial plan which, when implemented, has a high probability of improving basic skills performance.

A school which has less than 65 percent of its students meeting the state minimum standard on MBS tests, and where the test results have remained static or declined since 1977-78, will be scheduled for a comprehensive basic skills program review unless an acceptable rebuttal is submitted by the district.

The comprehensive basic skills program review is designed to analyze the existing school program and practices in relationship to those factors which have been identified, through research, to be associated with successful achievement in basic skills. Research has shown that no single factor is associated with successful education; rather, it is a network of interlocking components. These factors include (1) district policies and school management practices, (2) staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations, (3) basic skills program, (4) instructional time, and (5) parent/community relations. Therefore, the comprehensive review team will look at school practices broadly, not just at the formal basic skills program.

Through this structured review process, the department plans to provide districts with recommendations that have a high probability of leading to improvement in basic skills. It is the district's responsibility, however, to develop a remedial plan which appropriately fits its needs and resources.

Comprehensive Review Team (CRT)

In cases where comprehensive basic skills program reviews are needed, the county superintendent will select teams of about five persons from a list developed by the Commissioner of Education. Comprehensive review team members will have a variety of backgrounds and will be selected because of their knowledge of schools and basic skills.

The team will spend approximately three days at a school interviewing staff, reviewing policies and materials, and observing educational practices. (See Appendix A for sample schedule.) Each school will be asked to appoint a local review team consisting of administrators, teachers and parents. It is recommended that this local team be actively involved in the three-day site review as well as in the preparation of a remedial plan.

The comprehensive review team will meet with the local review team at the outset of the visit to provide initial information, and at the end of the review to discuss findings and recommendations. The final report of the team will be sent to the district within ten days of the visit.

The comprehensive basic skills program review is designed both as a service and as a statewide effort to improve education. Districts are not required to follow the recommendations of the comprehensive review team in preparing a remedial plan. However, if recommendations are not followed, it is expected that the district would provide strong rationale to support the proposed alternative strategies which it considers more likely to lead to improvement in basic skills achievement in its particular situation.

Responsibilities and Activities of School Staff

Practically all staff in a school will be involved in one way or another in the comprehensive review process. The roles of two different groups of school staff are discussed in this section: school administrators and staff, and the local review team.

School Administrators and Staff

The district superintendent will be actively involved in coordinating and overseeing the comprehensive basic skills program review. As the educational leader of the district, the superintendent's responsibilities are to:

- . coordinate dates for the Comprehensive Review Team visit with county office staff.
- . organize an orientation to the comprehensive basic skills program review process for school staff and participate in the orientation
- . make central office staff available to the CRT
- . be available to discuss district policies with the CRT
- . transmit the CRT report to the board of education and to the school
- . ensure the preparation of a remedial plan and its approval by the board of education
- . oversee the implementation of the remedial plan.

School improvement is a building level phenomenon and the school principal is key to preparing for the comprehensive review team's visit and conducting a successful review. Responsibilities of the principal before and during the review include:

- . meeting with the county school program coordinator to learn about the comprehensive review process and to schedule the visit

- . participating in the selection of the local review team
- . meeting with the local review team and with school staff in order to explain the comprehensive review process and enlist their support
- . scheduling conference and workroom space for the CRT
- . arranging for lunches at the school for team members
- . making staff available in accordance with the CRT's schedule of interviews and observations
- . providing relevant school data for CRT members
- . participating in a discussion of the results of the comprehensive basic skills program review
- . organizing a staff meeting to hear the CRT's recommendations
- . monitoring the development and implementation of the remedial plan

The comprehensive program review process is different in many ways from other school evaluation processes. It represents a "comprehensive" look at one portion of the school program, i.e., the basic skills program. It is important for the school staff to understand that the comprehensive review team is reviewing the basic skills program against research factors and not the team members' individual preferences. Moreover, the team's final recommendations do not represent mandatory changes. What is mandatory is that the school consider these recommendations and develop a remedial plan.

At the request of the administration, the school staff is responsible for assembling relevant data about the school and the students and for meeting and talking with the review team. Also, staff will meet with the Comprehensive Review Team to hear the CRT's analysis and recommendations. Lastly, the staff will contribute to the development and implementation of the remedial plan.

Local Review Team (LRT)

A local review team is a formally constituted group which is authorized to engage in tasks related to a school improvement effort in basic skills. The basic responsibilities of the Local Review Team are (1) to help the school prepare for the visit, (2) to participate in the comprehensive basic skills program review, and (3) to prepare a written remedial plan. The remedial plan will be submitted to the county superintendent and to the Commissioner of Education for final approval. The local review team should be closely involved in the comprehensive program review process because recommendations for inclusion in the remedial plan will result from the comprehensive basic skills program review.

The local review team consists of 5 to 10 persons from the school staff and school community. It is suggested that this team include:

- . principal
- . specialists (i.e., reading, math, guidance)
- . teachers
- . supervisors
- . parent/community representatives, board members, and students (where appropriate)

The following chart shows the relationship between the local review team, the comprehensive review team, and the areas of program review.

<u>Local Review Team Members</u>	<u>Comprehensive Review Team Counterparts</u>	<u>Comprehensive Program Review Areas</u>
Principal District Superintendent	Team Leader	District policies and school management practices
Administrator Teacher	School Administrator	Staff knowledge, atti- tudes and expectations

<u>Local Review Team Members</u>	<u>Comprehensive Review Team Counterparts</u>	<u>Comprehensive Program Review Areas</u>
Reading Supervisor Reading Teacher Teacher	Reading Specialist	Basic skills program (reading) Instructional time (reading)
Math Supervisor Teacher	Mathematics Specialist	Basic skills program (math) Instructional time (math)
School Board Members Parent and Student (where appropriate)	School Administrator or Community Person	Parent-community relations

The local review team is responsible for:

- . reading the comprehensive basic skills program review materials in advance of the site visit
- . participating in an orientation of school staff on the comprehensive program review process and CRT visit
- . providing descriptive information requested by the CRT and/or any other information that the local staff believes would help the visiting team to better understand the school (e.g., school's philosophy, the community it serves, operation of the basic skills program)
- . reviewing the verbal and written reports prepared by the CRT.
- . participating in meetings with the entire school staff to discuss the CRT's recommendations, the school's remedial plan, and how the remedial plan will be implemented
- . assisting the school district in translating the CRT's recommendations into a remedial plan
- . participating in the implementation of the remedial plan.

The activities of the CRT in connection with each of these major responsibilities is discussed in more detail in the remainder of this section.

The department has prepared a series of documents which describe and clarify the comprehensive program review process. The LRT will be provided with a packet of information prior to the CRT visit. This information should be read and verbally reviewed well in advance of the visit.

The district staff and LRT will provide an orientation to the comprehensive program review process for school staff. It is recommended that the total staff of the school receives information which addresses the following questions:

- . Why are we having this CRT visit?
- . What is the purpose of a CRT visit?
- . What will happen during the three-day visit?
- . Who will be involved with the CRT?
- . What is the role of the LRT?
- . What happens after the visit?

In preparing for this orientation, the LRT and school staff will need to decide:

- . who will conduct the orientation? (Usually the principal conducts this session, but other LRT members may assist and the county office staff may be asked to help answer questions.)
- . what written material would be useful to school staff?
- . how soon before the visit should the orientation occur? (An orientation generally takes about one hour to conduct.)

Note: The Overview of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Review Process should be of assistance in conducting this session.

The LRT represents a cross-section (or all) of the comprehensive basic skills review program team (i.e., administrative, supervisory and instructional staff for both the developmental and supplemental programs). As such,

team members are asked to provide initial information concerning the school's program and practices. LRT members will meet on the first day of the school visit with their counterpart on the CRT team. The school will need to schedule time for these interviews. CRT members will ask LRT members to describe such things as:

- . what is included in the program
- . how the program works
- . staff roles in relation to program organization
- . staff attitudes on the effectiveness of the program
- . Suggestions from the staff on how the program could be improved.

The LRT will be collecting and organizing information of this kind for the CRT. The following questions should be considered in preparing for the CRT's visit:

- . What kind of information will the CRT need?
- . What sources of information are available?
- . How will the information be organized?
- . What information is required for each of the CRT members and/or all members?
- . How soon before the visit should CRT members have this information in order to adequately prepare for the visit?

Note: The county office school program coordinator can serve as a useful resource in identifying specific information as well as identifying sources of information.

Prior to the verbal presentation to the total staff, the CRT will verbally present its findings and recommendations to the LRT and administrative staff. The LRT is asked to participate in this discussion to insure a concise

understanding of the CRT's recommendations. This is important so that the LRT can assist the district/school in preparing and implementing the remedial plan.

In the future, the LRT can be helpful to other staff by providing first-hand information about the visit, the kinds of questions asked, and the results of its discussions with the CRT regarding the CRT's findings. This communication role, though often informal, may be a critically important factor in gaining the future support of the staff for the school's remedial plan.

Preparation for a Remedial Plan

The comprehensive review team will make recommendations to assist the district and school in developing a remedial plan. This plan, when implemented, should have a high probability of improving basic skills performance. After reviewing the final written report, the district/school should analyze the report to determine:

- . the strengths and weaknesses identified in the district/school basic skills program
- . what specific recommendations should be considered in developing the remedial plan
- . what expertise exists within the school/district to develop the remedial plan
- . who in the school/district needs to accept and/or be committed to the plan to insure its successful implementation.

One person in the district should be responsible for supervising the development and implementation of the plan to ensure the flow and completion of activities. Since the district/school might find it helpful to prepare a brief calendar of activities, a sample calendar is provided in an Appendix to this document.

APPENDIX A

Sample Schedule for Team Visit

FIRST DAY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
8:00 a.m.	Review Team and county school program coordinator meet at the school to review schedule and other plans for visit.	Library
8:30 a.m.	Team leader directs a group interview with principal and superintendent about district policies, school management practices and school and district organization.	Library
10:00 a.m.	Principal conducts tour of school facility.	Library
10:30 a.m.	Each reviewer interviews local review team staff to collect preliminary information in assigned areas.	Various Locations
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Team members continue to collect preliminary information from local school staff through interviews, classroom observation, or other methods.	Various Locations
2:30 p.m.	Team members meet to discuss preliminary findings and further data collection activities.	Library

SECOND DAY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
8:00 a.m.	Team members meet to coordinate data collection activities during the day.	Library
8:30 a.m.	A schedule for each team member's activities is prepared in consultation with the School Principal.	Library
9:00 a.m.	Team members collect additional information in each area to verify data already collected and to explore preliminary findings.	Various Locations
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Individual data collection activities.	Various Locations
2:30 p.m.	Team members write tentative "conclusions and recommendations" in their assigned areas.	Library

THIRD DAY

8:00 a.m.	Team members meet to discuss their conclusions and recommendations, and to outline the team report.	Library
10:30 a.m.	Team members write their final reports. Team leader writes the overall team report.	Library
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Team meets to review final reports and prepare oral presentation.	Library
2:00 p.m.	Team leader and team members orally present final report to local review team.	Library
3:00 p.m.	Team leader and team members orally present final report to entire school staff.	Auditorium

APPENDIX B

Remedial Plan Development Model Calendar of Activities

Activity	Who is Responsible	Completion Date
1. District/school identifies who in the district will be involved in the development of the remedial plan. 2. District/school provides writing team/person with CRT's final report and remedial plan format; establishes deadlines and identifies who in the district must be involved in giving input, critique and approval. 3. The writing team/person prepares the first draft of the remedial plan. 4. Designated staff reviews and critiques draft. 5. The writing team/person revises the plan according to critiques. 6. The plan is presented to the staff as a whole for its reaction and support. 7. The final draft is approved by those designated to do so. 8. The remedial plan is presented to the superintendent and board of education for approval. 9. The remedial plan is submitted to the county office for review. 10. A) The county office forwards the remedial plan to the office of the Commissioner of Education. B) The county office identifies additional needs for specificity, responses to problem areas, etc.		

Activity	Who is Responsible	Completion Date
11) The writing team/person responds to the county office review and re-submits the plan for county office approval.		
12. The county office forwards the remedial plan to the office of the Commissioner of Education.		
13. The plan is approved by the Department of Education.		



COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

SUMMER, 1980

PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR COUNTY
SCHOOL PROGRAM COORDINATORS

**PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR COUNTY SCHOOL
PROGRAM COORDINATORS**

**Fred G. Burke
Commissioner of Education**

**Gustav H. Ruh
Deputy Commissioner of Education**

**Prepared under the direction of
the Commissioner's Office and
Deputy Commissioner's Office**

**New Jersey State Department of Education
225 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625**

Summer, 1980

PTM # 100.56

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PROCEDURAL GUIDE FOR COUNTY SCHOOL PROGRAM COORDINATORS

School program coordinators in county offices throughout the state play a central role in the comprehensive program review process. They work with the county superintendent to initiate contact with the district to explain the need for a comprehensive basic skills program review. Further, they serve as facilitators to the district and the comprehensive review team, act as problem solvers when needed, and help the team structure its visit, using the comprehensive basic skills program review materials. Finally, the school program coordinators ensure that the final report of the team is within the guidelines established by the state department, carefully edited and typed, and delivered to the district, the county superintendent and the central staff of the department.

This document is designed to provide the school program coordinators with a checklist of activities to be performed as they organize the visit of the comprehensive review team to the school, coordinate the visit at the school site, and assist in preparing the final report of the comprehensive review team.

Organizing the School Visit

- _____ 1.a. Examine MBS test data and other relevant information which determines the need for a comprehensive basic skills program review.
- _____ b. Identify specific school(s) and the special area(s) of review needed (i.e., math or reading or both).
- _____ 2.a. In consultation with the county superintendent, identify the members of comprehensive review team(s).
 - . Relate the composition of the team to the type of community involved in the review.
 - . Match team members according to their ability to work well together.
 - . Include team members who have expertise and experience in the areas of the basic skills program under consideration.
- _____ b. Select the team leader.
- _____ c. Develop a list of alternates.
- _____ 3. Contact each prospective member by phone to determine the dates they are available.
- _____ 4. Communicate with the local superintendent regarding the following:

- . Selection of specific dates the visit could take place and a set of alternate dates.
- . Names of the comprehensive review team members.
- . Formation of the local review team.
- . The school program coordinator's role in the review process and how the county office might be helpful to the district.

(Be sure to give enough lead time to allow for district staff involvement in organizing the visit, conducting its own orientation, forming the local review team, etc.)

- _____ 5. Provide the local superintendent with a package of review materials including An Overview of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process, the Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs, and any other relevant information.
- _____ 6. Send a package of materials to each comprehensive review team member including:
 - . A letter confirming his/her participation on the team
 - . Visit and training dates
 - . A Procedural Guide for Program Reviewers
 - . An Overview of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Program Review Process
 - . Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs
 - . Report Forms
 - . School descriptive information*
- _____ 7. In cooperation with the school principal, prepare a tentative agenda for the visit of the review team.
- _____ 8.a. During the training session for the comprehensive review team, review the agenda for the visit with the team and revise as necessary.
- _____ b. Conduct any part of the training previously agreed to between the county office and central department staff.

*Descriptive information may vary from one school to another. However, most reviewers should receive: (a) demographics of the district; (b) monitoring reports; (c) June 1 letters; (d) categorical aid applications; and (e) skills array of area(s) being reviewed. A data profile of each school will be developed by the department's Office of Management Information Services.

- _____ c. Ascertain from the comprehensive review team which resources should be provided by the county office (e.g., additional information about the school, transportation arrangements, etc.)
- _____ 9. Meet, as necessary with the principal as he/she conducts the orientation for the school staff.
- _____ 10. Assist the local review team or other district and school staff in the preparation of a district/school information packet including:
 - . Floor plan of the school building.
 - . A schedule of activities of each teacher during the school visit.
 - . A listing of the names and job titles of all administrative and teaching staff.
 - . Other data pertinent to the review, such as curriculum guides, school handbooks, discipline codes, etc.
 - . Relevant telephone numbers.
- _____ 11. Meet with the principal three or four days prior to the visit to ensure that the interview and observation schedule is arranged, support services and team meeting space is available, etc.

Coordinating the School Visit

- _____ 1. Arrive early to make sure everything is in order and to make introductions.
- _____ 2. Foster a climate of cooperation between team and the school staff.
- _____ 3. Be responsive to requests from team members and school staff.
- _____ 4. Reinforce the need to focus on the research factors as team members gather data.
- _____ 5. Serve as facilitator during the process as needed (i.e., help with communication between school and team, provide specific insights about the school, program, etc.)
- _____ 6. Work with the team leader during the process to keep CRT members on target and on schedule.
- _____ 7. Work with the principal during the process to solve problems as needed.

- _____ 8. Provide additional information about the district/school and/or program to the CRT as needed.
- _____ 9. Identify other sources of information (e.g., materials, people, etc.) as requested by the CRT.
- _____ 10. Serve as resource person during the discussion sessions of the CRT.

Preparing the Final Report

- _____ 1. Serve as facilitator during the writing of the report.
 - . Ensure that space is provided for the CRT to write report.
 - . Be available to answer questions from the CRT members.
 - . Help to resolve concerns about format and content of report.
- _____ 2. Review report to assure that it focuses on the research factors, and that the language is appropriate.
- _____ 3. Provide for the typing and proofreading of the report.
- _____ 4. Provide copies of report to the district superintendent, central department staff, and team leader.
- _____ 5. Review the report with the district staff (superintendent, principal, local review team).
- _____ 6. Send letters of appreciation to the review team, the district superintendent and the school principal.
- _____ 7. Maintain the final reports of the team in the county office for future reference.
- _____ 8. Analyze final reports of all team visits to schools in the county: to generate a list of school improvement needs; to help focus inservice programs in the county; to influence priorities of other agencies (e.g., EICs, colleges); and to substantiate requests for special funding.

Dissemination of the final report completes the first stage of the school improvement process. During the next two stages of the process involving the preparation of a remedial plan and its subsequent approval and implementation, the school program coordinator will be involved in additional tasks ranging from providing technical assistance to monitoring the implementation of remedial plans. A further guide to activities during these subsequent stages will be provided at a later date.

- _____ c. Ascertain from the comprehensive review team which resources should be provided by the county office (e.g., additional information about the school, transportation arrangements, etc.)
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COMPREHENSIVE
BASIC SKILLS
PROGRAM REVIEW

SUMMER, 1980

LOCAL PROGRAM REVIEW

COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

LOCAL PROGRAM REVIEW

Fred G. Burke
Commissioner of Education

Prepared under the direction of
Office of the Commissioner

New Jersey State Department of Education
225 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Summer, 1980

P.T.M. #100.63

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The comprehensive review process was developed through the collective efforts of many individuals. Gustav Ruh, Thomas Corcoran and Evelyn Ogden coordinated the project. This summary document was prepared by Dr. Ogden, William Volk and Carolyn Forney.

The comprehensive review committee consisted of staff from the New Jersey State Department of Education, county offices, EIC-South and Research for Better Schools. The New Jersey Association of Secondary School Principals and Supervisors provided input concerning the high school review process.

Special thanks go to the many local educators who served on the pilot team and to the staffs of Logan Township Public Schools, Paterson Public Schools, Elizabeth Public Schools, Perth Amboy Public Schools and Pleasantville Public Schools for their participation in field testing the process.

Appreciation is expressed to the county superintendents and their staffs in the Gloucester, Passaic, Middlesex, Atlantic and Union County offices for arranging the pilots and reviewing the process.

Finally we acknowledge the assistance of Susan Clarke, the staff of the Word Processing and the Print Shop for typing and printing the materials and John Cornew for designing the logo.

Use of the Comprehensive Basic Skills Review Materials for a Local Program Review

The purpose of the comprehensive basic skills review (CBSR) is threefold. It is designed for the use of a local district to (1) analyze the existing school program and practices, (2) produce a detailed diagnosis of a school situation in regards to achievement in basic skills, and (3) develop recommendations to assist the district and school in the preparation of a strategy designed to increase student performance in the basic skills. A local program review rests upon the same foundation as does the CBSR; and, as such, it is useful to the local educator in providing a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of a local basic skills program.

Essentially the CBSR and local program review is a force for change. The best solutions to local educational problems are those invented or adopted by the people closest to the situation. Ultimately, long-lasting improvements are made by local individuals, and the degree of success achieved depends on their skill and effort.

The following information provides for the local educator an explanation of the CBSR and suggests how this mechanism and its related materials can be adapted for local use. At this point, it is necessary to stress that the local educator should consider the following suggestions merely as recommendations, and that a local district/school is free to create or select any methods it deems necessary to conduct a meaningful local program review.

Summary of Research Related to School Effectiveness

The CBSR process is unique in that criteria for the review process have been drawn from the research on effective schools. (The research is summarized in the booklet entitled Summary of Research Related to School Effectiveness.) Educational research has undergone a major revolution in the past decade. The new research focus represents a shift from studying what has been termed stable or static variables (e.g., socioeconomic status which includes parent education, occupation and income) to examining school characteristics that are alterable either before the teaching and learning processes or as part of these processes (e.g., encouragement of the child to learn and the ways in which time is utilized in the instructional program). This new body of research attests to the adage that schools and teachers do make a difference.

Research Factors Used for the Development of Comprehensive Basic Skills Review Materials

Hundreds of research studies describing dozens of different factors have been reported in the research literature. Synthesizing these studies for use in this review process was difficult because researchers use different labels to describe the same (or very similar) factors. Moreover, the research results in some areas are contradictory or inconclusive. The review process materials, therefore, are based upon only those factors and variables for which there appears to be consistent research support.

Research indicates that no single factor is associated with successful education; rather, success occurs when a network of interlocking components is in place. These alterable components, or factors, include: district policies and school management practices; staff knowledge, attitudes and expectations; basic skills program; instructional time; and parent/community relations. Therefore, the CBSR process is designed for educators to take a broad look at school practices as well as the formal basic skills program.

The educational utility of the above factors was considered in the synthesizing process. Educational utility in this case has three essential features: (1) reviewers and educators in the local school situation understand each factor and can relate it to the local educational program; (2) they can analyze programs in terms of the factor and suggest possible avenues for improvements; and (3) such improvements should logically lead to increased student performance in the basic skills. The results of the CBSR's piloted in five local districts substantiated the educational utility of these factors and their associated indicators.

The following is an amplified list of the factors which have been identified as affecting student learning in basic skills:

A. District Policies and School Management Practices

1. Basic Skills Policies - The district has well-defined policies in basic skills, the school has clearly stated improvement objectives, and there is evidence of schoolwide commitment to improving basic skills instruction.
2. Discipline Policies - There is a minimal amount of disruption in the school. The school has a conduct code with clear standards for behavior; it is approved by the board of education, communicated to all members of the school community, enforced by the school staff, and is viewed as fair and consistently applied in all cases.
3. Staff Development Procedures - The school administration has a strong commitment to improving the skills of its staff. Staff development programs are planned and conducted in collaboration with the teaching staff and are evaluated and revised over time.
4. Decision-Making Procedures - The school has formulated procedures for decision-making with reference to basic skills instruction. These procedures are established within the school (e.g., curriculum planning committees).

B. Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations

1. Teacher Knowledge of Instructional Content - The staff is knowledgeable about the structure and substance of the reading and mathematics content it is responsible for teaching.

2. Staff Attitudes Toward the Basic Skills Program - The staff agrees with the overall priority placed on basic skills instruction, the goals of the program and the content and methods used.
3. Principals' Attitudes Toward Their Role - The principal places high priority on the role of instructional leadership and plays an active professional role in the basic skills program of the school.
4. Staff Expectations About Student Learning - The administrators and teachers believe all students are capable of acquiring the basic skills. They avoid the use of negative labels for students and use positive techniques, as rewards and praise, to motivate students to learn.

C. The Basic Skills Program

1. The Reading and Mathematics Instructional Program

The planned and classroom implemented curriculum includes the following as aligned and interrelated elements:

- . Expected Outcomes - Sequenced skills arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels and are related to the standardized tests used in the district.
- . Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- . Assessment - There are criterion-referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he/she has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- . Record-keeping System - The student record-keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. Within a district where there is high mobility of students, the system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school.

2. Instructional management includes:

- . classroom teacher-managed instruction
- . strong direct leadership by teachers
- . flexible grouping of students based on assessed learner needs
- . positive methods of control
- . in-class compensatory education
- . lack of classroom disruption

D. Instructional Time

1. Time in Basic Skills Instruction - The school allocates sufficient instructional time to the teaching of reading and mathematics. Student and teacher attendance provides for maximum basic skills instruction.
2. Classroom Instructional Time - Teachers apply effective strategies to organizing and managing the learning environment for the teaching of reading and mathematics.
3. Student Engaged Time - In reading and mathematics instruction, students spend a high proportion of their scheduled time actively engaged in academic work.

E. Parent and Community Relations

1. Parent and Community Relations with the Basic Skills Program - The school communicates with parents and community members about the basic skills program (e.g., student expectations, content of instruction, evaluation, reporting system). The school also encourages parents to communicate with the school and to become involved with the child's instructional program.
2. Parent and Community Relations and the Non-Instructional Process - The administration and teachers communicate with the parents and community regarding school policies and practices. Active participation of parents is encouraged for the purpose of providing a safe, pleasant and effective learning environment. Parents are supportive of the school program.

Suggested Procedures for Conducting a
Local Program Review

1. Selecting the Review Team

Practically all staff in a particular district or school will be involved in some way in the local program review. The district superintendent of schools or school principal selects a minimum of ten persons from the school staff and school community to serve on the review team. After selecting this review team, the superintendent establishes sub-teams responsible for collecting data on one or more of the factors A-E mentioned above. Each of the sub-teams assigned to reading and mathematics programs also review the instructional time section.

Research indicates that the involvement of the principal in providing instructional leadership is essential to improving student achievement in basic skills. Therefore, in this local program review, the principal should seriously consider acting as chairperson of the review team.

Table I shows the possible makeup and assignments of review team members.

Table I

Example of review team membership and assignments

Chairperson	-	Principal
District Policies and School Management	-	Assistant Principal
	-	Central Office staff person
	-	Teacher
Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations	-	Administrator or Department Chairperson
	-	Teacher
Reading Basic Skills Program/ Instructional Time*	-	English Department Chairperson
	-	Teacher
Mathematics Basic Skills Program/ Instructional Time*	-	Math Supervisor or Compensatory Education Supervisor
	-	Teacher
Parent and Community Relations	-	Parent/board member/ Title I Council member

*Reading and Math sub-teams also review Instructional Time area.

II. Reviewing The CBSR Materials

The CBSR materials were originally designed to be used by a team of reviewers from outside the district. Nevertheless, these can serve as an effective tool for conducting a local program review.

The first job of the review team is to become acquainted with the materials in preparation for the local program review. Even though each of the sub-teams will be focusing on one or two areas, it is essential that all team members be familiar with the entire process. The following materials should be reviewed by all the review team members.

A. Booklet: Summary of Research Related to School Effectiveness

The factors included in the research on effective schools were synthesized and summarized in this booklet. As each reviewer studies his or her assigned area, it is particularly important to gain a clear understanding of the research base that supports the selection of factors. Each factor and its associated indicators were derived from research results showing relationships between these alterable characteristics of a school's program and student performance in the basic skills. The relevant research in each area is summarized to help the reviewer understand how these factors are defined and why they were selected as possible targets for improvement. Reviewers might also consider reading the actual studies cited. Many of the studies can be found in a large educational library. A complete set of all documents cited is also available at the Department of Education building in Trenton, New Jersey.

B. Booklet: Guidelines for Reviewing Basic Skills Programs

The purpose, nature, and use of the guidelines is described in detail in the introductory section of the document itself. Since this is the basic instrument to be used in the local program review, each reviewer should carefully study its contents, paying particular attention to the areas he or she is assigned.

The guidelines are designed to provide reviewers with a research-based structure for collecting and reporting relevant data concerning a school's basic skills program. Consistent use of the guidelines by reviewers is vital to ensure continuity among team members. Six areas of school's basic skills program are covered in this document. These areas have been described previously under the section on research factors.

In each major area, the reviewer is provided with a short outline of suggested procedures and sources of information to be considered in analyzing each factor. To further structure data collection with reference to each factor, specific indicators of important aspects of the overall factor are noted, and space for reviewer comments is provided beside these indicators. Finally, space is provided in the guidelines for reviewers to write conclusions and recommendations based on their collected data.

C. Report Forms

These forms are a vehicle for organizing and communicating the team's conclusions and recommendations. Most of the forms appear in the guidelines. These forms are used by the reviewer to organize a preliminary set of conclusions and recommendations. The identical pages in the Report Forms are used to record a final set of conclusions and recommendations. In addition, major space is provided for recommendations. Specific information about how to complete these forms is provided in a later section of this document.

III. Establishing Time Lines and Methods of Operation

When CBSR's are conducted by outside teams, approximately 18 hours (3 days) per reviewer are required to collect data, to agree on recommendations and to complete the report. However, a considerable part of this time is spent becoming familiar with the school. A local review team should be able to complete its work in less time.

Every school will have to work out methods of operation which fit its needs, constraints and schedules. However, a scheduled inservice day might serve as a time for the team to organize and orient the rest of the staff to the process. (It is important that all members of the school staff know the purpose of the review and the methods to be used to collect data.) Another possibility is for team members to use professional days within the building to collect data and complete the report. Time set aside for staff meetings might also be used.

Appendix A is a schedule developed for outside teams which might be helpful in scheduling your local program review.

IV. Data Collection

Suggested procedures for collecting data follow each factor which appears in the guidelines. These are only suggestions and each sub-team will have to develop its own approach. Regardless of the method used, the goal is to solicit the broadest input possible. The following is a general list of sources:

- 1) interviews (administrators, teachers, students, parents)
- 2) state and local test data
- 3) pupil records, teacher reports, grading structure
- 4) job descriptions and organizational charts
- 5) board of education policy
- 6) inservice agenda
- 7) course schedules
- 8) district/school goals and objectives
- 9) budget

Important: Reviewers should be objective and follow the guidelines carefully. The judgment of the reviewer obviously plays an important role in the CBSR process. The materials are designed to focus the reviewer's attention on specific aspects of the performance in the basic skills. The reviewer uses professional judgment in collecting relevant information, reaching conclusions and making recommendations.

V. Developing the Report

The report is then sent to the district superintendent of schools and is finally shared with the board of education.

VII. Improvement Plan

As mentioned in the first paragraph of this document, the comprehensive basic skills review is designed for the use of a local district to:

- 1) analyze the existing school program and practices.
The review team accomplishes this by collecting data with the aid of the CSBR materials, by conducting interviews and consulting other sources of information, as suggested in the guidelines.
- 2) produce a detailed diagnosis of a school situation in regards to achievement in basic skills.
Throughout the data collection activities, the review team records its findings related to the specific indicators corresponding to the factors in each section of the guidelines.
- 3) develop recommendations to assist the district and school in the preparation of a strategy, or improvement plan, to increase student performance in the basic skills.
The findings recorded by each reviewer during the data collection activities provides a solid basis for drawing final conclusions and making specific final recommendations for improvement (short and long term) to the school staff, district superintendent of schools and board of education. At this point, the local program review is completed, and it is the responsibility of the district/school to begin the preparation of an improvement plan based upon the recommendations of the review team.

In preparing the improvement plan, the district/school should analyze the final conclusions and recommendations submitted by the review team to determine:

- . the strengths and weaknesses identified in the basic skills program;
- . how specific recommendations can be incorporated in the improvement plan;
- . what expertise exists within the district/school to develop the improvement plan;
- . who in the district/school needs to accept and/or be committed to the plan to insure its successful implementation.

It is recommended that the principal be given the responsibility for supervising the development and implementation of the plan to ensure the flow and completion of activities.

VIII. Technical Assistance Available

Although the local district/school will probably find it best to develop and implement its own improvement plan, they can request help from other agencies. Such assistance can come from inside as well as outside the district or school. External resources include technical assistance from the State Department of Education, Educational Improvement Centers, and public and private institutions of higher education. Internal assistance can come from the community, the district and school administration and staff, and the review team itself. Thus, local districts and schools should experience considerable support as they work to develop and implement their improvement plans based on the local program review.

Appendix A

Below is a sample schedule recommended in the CBSR process which review team members might follow. As you read, keep in mind that the schedule below describes activities of a team consisting of members from outside the local district or school and that considerable time is spent by this outside team in becoming familiar with the school being reviewed. If you are part of a review team comprised of members who are already part of the district or school being reviewed it might not be necessary to tour a school facility. It should be noted that this sample schedule is only a guide and may be modified by local review teams.

Appendix A

Sample Schedule of an(Outside) Review Team Member's Visit

FIRST DAY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
8:00 a.m.	Review Team and County School Program Coordinator meet at school to discuss plans for the visit.	Library
8:30 a.m.	Team Chairperson (and other team members) conduct a group interview with the Principal and Superintendent about "school policies and practices."	Library
10:00 a.m.	Principal conducts tour of school facility.	
10:30 a.m.	Each reviewer interviews appropriate internal staff members to collect information in designated areas (sub-teams).	Designated Offices/Classrooms
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Team members continue to collect information from school staff through interviews, classroom observations, and other methods.	Designated offices/classrooms
2:30 p.m.	Team members meet to discuss preliminary findings and to plan further data collection activities.	Library

SECOND DAY

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
8:00 a.m.	All team members meet to coordinate data collection activities during the day.	Library
8:30 a.m.	A schedule for each team member's activities is prepared in consultation with the school principal.	Library
9:00 a.m.	Team members collect additional information in each area to verify data already collected and to explore preliminary findings.	Various Locations
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Individual data collection activities.	Various Locations
2:30 p.m.	Team members write tentative "conclusions and recommendations" in their designated areas.	Library

THIRD DAY

8:00 a.m.	Sub-team members meet to discuss their individual conclusions and recommendations, and to outline the team report.	Library
10:30 a.m.	Sub-team members write their final reports. Chairperson writes the overall team report.	Library
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	School Cafeteria
1:00 p.m.	Entire team meets to review final reports and to prepare oral presentation.	Library
2:00 p.m.	Chairperson and team members present final report in oral form to entire school staff.	Library or Auditorium



COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

SUMMER, 1980

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GUIDELINES

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COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS

PROGRAM REVIEW

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GUIDELINES

Fred G. Burke
Commissioner of Education

Gustav H. Ruh
Deputy Commissioner of Education

Prepared under the direction of
Office of the Commissioner and
Office of the Deputy Commissioner

New Jersey State Department of Education
225 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Summer, 1980

P.T.M. # 100.48

Revised

ABJ

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	1
Introduction	1
Bibliography	4
I. District Policies and School Management Practices.	13
A. Basic Skills Policies.	16
B. Discipline Policies.	22
C. Staff Development Policies	27
D. Decision-Making Policies	32
II. Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations.	36
A. Teacher Knowledge of Instructional Content	39
B. Staff Attitudes Toward the Basic Skills.	42
C. Principal's Attitudes Toward His/Her Role.	46
D. Staff Expectations about Student Learning.	49
III. Basic Skills Program - Reading	53
A. Developmental Reading.	56
B. Compensatory Reading	69
C. Management of Developmental and Compensatory Reading Instruction	78
IV. Basic Skills Program - Mathematics	86
A. Developmental Mathematics.	88
B. Compensatory Mathematics	102
C. Management of Developmental and Compensatory Mathematics Instruction	111
V. Instructional Time	119
A. Attendance of Staff and Students	121
B. Classroom Instructional Time	125
C. Student Engaged Time	128
VI. Parent and Community Relations	134
A. Parent and Community Relations and the Basic Skills Program.	138
B. Parent and Community Relations and the Non-Instructional Processes	142

GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWING BASIC SKILLS PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

This document presents guidelines for conducting a review of basic skills programs at individual schools. An introduction to the subject, this section discusses four topics: purpose of the guidelines, organization of the document, use of the materials, and discussion of major issues.

Purpose of the Guidelines

These guidelines were developed by the New Jersey State Department of Education for use by external experts who will visit local schools to analyze their basic skills programs and provide recommendations for program improvement. Comprehensive basic skills program reviews are normally scheduled for schools with many students who are below defined standards on the statewide tests of minimum basic skills.

These guidelines, however, may be used for different purposes in other situations. For example, a local school might use the guidelines for an internal review and analysis of its basic skills program. The process might also be employed by an individual teacher to analyze his/her classroom practices.

Organization of the Document

This document is divided into six main sections to facilitate the review of different areas of a school's basic skills program: District Policies and School Management Practices; Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations; Basic Skills Program - Reading; Basic Skills Program - Mathematics; Instructional Time; and Parent and Community Relations. Each section or area has seven parts which include:

1. a brief review of the research literature identifying alterable factors that research has shown are related to student learning in the basic skills
2. a statement of the factors in each area selected for intensive review
3. considerations for reviewing the factors
4. suggested procedures
5. suggested sources of information
6. a series of indicators to be used to guide the review of local programs and policies
7. forms to be used to summarize conclusions and recommendations about the school's program with reference to each factor.

Finally, the findings in each area are drawn together to form an overall conclusion about the school's basic skills program and to provide a list of recommendations in order of priority.

Use of the Materials

The review process is essentially the same for each of the five areas described above. The generic review process is outlined in this section, using as an example the area called "District Policies and School Management Practices."

The literature in the area of "District Policies and School Management Practices" suggests four factors related to student achievement in the basic skills: basic skills policies, discipline policies, staff development procedures, and decision-making procedures. The team member assigned to this area collects information about the factor, for example, discipline policies, by raising questions such as: Does this school have a written policy on discipline? Are the staff and students generally aware of the policy? Is the policy effective in reducing discipline problems? The team member may use individual or group interviews, observations, document analyses, or a combination of these methods to collect the relevant information.

After collecting information on these and other questions deemed important, the team member reaches a set of conclusions about the discipline policies in the school (e.g., that the school's policies on discipline are ambiguously stated, are not clear to the staff or students, and are rarely enforced). Recommendations for improvement are also provided.

Each factor is studied in this manner. Eventually, the team member meets with other members of the comprehensive review team to prepare a final team report.

Discussion of Major Issues

The user of these materials should be aware of three major issues: 1) the process the New Jersey State Department of Education employed to select the factors included in this document; 2) the critical role of the team member's judgment in the comprehensive review process; and 3) the need to emphasize how the factors are interrelated.

The sections, factors and indicators included in this document are derived from research results showing relationships between alterable aspects of a school's program and student performance in the basic skills. However, literally hundreds of research studies describing dozens of different factors have been reported in the research literature. Synthesizing these studies for use in the present situation proved a difficult undertaking since researchers often tend to use different labels to describe the same (or very similar) factors. Moreover, the research results in some areas are contradictory or inconclusive. These materials, therefore, represent a selected number of the factors and indicators reported in the literature for which there appears to be consistent support.

In addition to research support, the educational utility of the factors was considered in the selection process. That is, a second major criterion for including a factor (or a set of indicators related to the factor) was the utility of the concept for helping schools improve their educational programs. Educational utility is defined as consisting of three essential features: 1) team members and educators in the school situation can understand the description of the factor and relate to it an aspect of the district's educational program; 2) they can analyze programs in terms of the factor and suggest possible avenues for improvement; and 3) such improvements can logically lead to increased student performance in the basic skills. Pilot tests were conducted to ensure the educational utility of these factors and their indicators.

The judgment of the team member obviously plays an important role in the comprehensive review process. Essentially, the process is designed to focus attention on specific aspects of the school's program that may need to be improved in order to increase student performance in the basic skills. The team member decides which methods to use in collecting relevant information, and uses professional judgement in the criteria to be employed in reaching conclusions and making recommendations.

In the final analysis, considerable care should be taken to avoid overemphasis on the importance of any single weakness discovered in the school's program. Even schools with superior basic skills programs may find room for improvement in one area or another. Furthermore, a piecemeal effort to strengthen a particular problem area will probably have little or no effect on student learning. Significant improvements are more likely to result from a school-wide effort to strengthen the educational program across a number of deficient factors or areas.

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DISTRICT POLICIES AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
(PART I OF VI)

I. District Policies and School Management Practices

A substantial body of research indicates that school policies and practices can influence student performance in the basic skills. Rutter, et al. (1979), for example, argue that the school staff can develop an environment where the norms and values of the school are communicated through clear and consistent expectations and appropriate models with feedback. These norms and values may in turn be translated into more formal statements of school policies and practices that influence student achievement. Some of the building climate or environmental factors that the researchers found are important in influencing student achievement are: academic emphasis, rewards and praise, discipline and punishment, staff organization, and student/teacher out-of-class interaction.

Similar results were reported by other researchers with reference to specific policies and procedures in the larger school environment. Brookover and Lezotte (1976) found that schools may impact student achievement by fostering a school-wide emphasis on the basic skills. They believe the school needs to have clearly stated improvement objectives in the basic skills which are understood and applied by the school staff. Moreover, their research suggests that all teachers in the school need to assume some responsibility for teaching the basic reading and math skills. Other researchers who reach similar conclusions include Carroll and Chall (1975), Holtzman and Boes (1973), and Wilder (1977).

The importance of discipline policies and procedures is cited by a number of researchers (Kounin, 1970; Soar, 1973; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Coker, Loving and Coher, 1974; Bidwell, 1973; Evertson and Brophy, 1973; Moos and Moos, 1979). The general argument here is that it is possible to influence student achievement by fostering classroom environments that are organized and operated with a minimum amount of distraction, disruption, and confusion. To insure controlled classroom environments, discipline policies and procedures are needed which include clear specifications of expectations, standards for evaluating student behavior that are viewed as fair, and a consistent application of all rules for dealing with infractions.

Another factor that has received considerable attention in the research literature is school policies and procedures with reference to staff development. Schools can develop and implement staff training programs which address teacher needs and thereby impart skills that eventually influence student learning. Successful staff development appears to be influenced by the following factors: teachers are included in planning programs; demonstration, practice and feedback of concrete skills is emphasized; teachers play active roles in the training program; the training program is an active part of an on-going problem-solving or school improvement process; staff development is accompanied by continuing staff support from resource personnel; and training is conducted during school time and at school expense. Support for the above assertions can be found in the work of Lawrence (1974), Answith (1976), McLaughlin (1978), Lessor and Olson (1977) and Tolbert (1978).

The decision-making policies and patterns in a school setting can also affect student learning (Rutter, et al., 1979). The factors that appear significant in this case are: the decision-making patterns with reference to the basic skills instructional program, the extent to which decision-making in this area is centralized or shared, and the degree to which decisions are made in a structured manner. Some indications of effective decision-making patterns in the school might be: planning committees exist; a problem-solving orientation is taken toward decision-making, information about decisions is widely disseminated; and feedback on decisions is sought and used in future decision-making. Additional research to support these findings is cited by Benz (1975), Scott (1977) and in Putting Knowledge to Use (1976).

01 160

161

District Policies and School Management Practices

Summary of Variables

- A. Basic Skills Policies - The district has well defined policies in basic skills, the school has clearly stated improvement objectives,* and school-wide commitment to improving basic skills instruction.
- B. Discipline Policies - The school has a discipline code approved by the board of education with clear standards for behavior; it is communicated to all members of the school community; it is enforced by the school staff; and it is viewed as fair and consistently applied in all cases.
- C. Staff Development Policies - The school administration has a strong commitment to improving the skills of the staff; staff development programs are planned and conducted in collaboration with the teaching staff; and in-service training programs are evaluated and revised over time.
- D. Decision-Making Policies - The school has formulated procedures for decision-making with reference to basic skills instruction; decision-making structures are established within the school (e.g., curriculum planning committees).

*A distinction is made in this document between improvement objectives and instructional objectives. The improvement objectives referred to here are a school-wide set of objectives which define the desired improvement of the student body over a given period of time (e.g., the number of sixth grade students achieving the minimum standards on the MBS test will increase by 15% by 1981). Instructional objectives (discussed in another section) refer to a hierarchy of objectives in specific skill areas. These objectives guide daily instruction for individual students in the classroom.

I.A. BASIC SKILLS POLICIES

Factor: I.A.1. The district places major emphasis on the basic skills.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

As defined in this factor, "major emphasis" includes the commitment by districts and schools to instructional time, fiscal and human resources to conduct and improve the developmental and compensatory basic skills programs. It also includes efforts to communicate the importance of student achievement resulting from the program to students, staff and community. The team member is asked to determine the degree to which these commitments and communication efforts exist.

Suggested Procedures

Review written policies, job descriptions, and budget allocations for the developmental and compensatory basic skills programs, specific time commitments to basic skills instruction, in-service agenda, sample communiques emphasizing the importance of basic skills achievement, district and school improvement objectives, and class size for basic skills instruction including the compensatory program. Team members should then interview and observe classes to validate that the verbal and written commitments have been translated into action.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Superintendent
Principal
Business Manager
Board Secretary
Teacher

Materials

Board of Education policy manual
Budgets - Basic Skills Program Improvement Budget
Title I/SCE Applications
Job descriptions

164

Indicators

1. There is evidence that the board of education and administration are committed to the importance of basic skills instruction. (i.e., local funds are allocated to developmental and compensatory program operation and improvement, time and resources are provided for needed staff development and specific roles are assigned to supervise and articulate the basic skills program district wide).

Comments/Findings

165

Indicators

Comments/Findings

2. The district's commitment to basic skills instruction is communicated to staff, students and parents by formal and informal means, (e.g., parent/teacher conferences, test results, report cards), in a way that is understood by all (i.e., in their dominant language, free of jargon, etc.).
3. There are clearly stated district and school improvement objectives in basic skills related to skill attainment, program improvement and student progress.
4. The district and school improvement objectives have been developed with staff input.
5. The staff is aware of and, in general, accepts the improvement objectives.
6. All teachers accept some responsibility for teaching basic skills and that responsibility has been defined.
7. District and school improvement objectives are evaluated each year and the results are communicated to the staff, the board of education and the community in a way that is understandable to all.
8. Specific minimum instructional time is defined by policy and practice for both the developmental and the compensatory basic skills programs.
9. The budget reflects local commitment to the maintenance and improvement of the developmental and compensatory basic skills programs.
10. The district has assigned supervisory/administrative staff to manage and articulate the basic skills program.

Conclusions concerning the emphasis on basic skills.

Recommendations concerning the emphasis on basic skills:

167

Factor: I.A.2. District policy assigns overall basic skills instructional leadership to the principal

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Research indicates that, in effective schools, the principal is a dominant force in the success or failure of programs. To carry out this role, he/she must have the responsibility for, and authority to:

- . directly supervise all staff in the school.
- . be formally involved in program, resources, policy and procedural decisions.
- . manage the implementation of district and school basic skills policies, procedures and programs.

Suggested Procedures

In reviewing this factor, it is important to consider the official and perceived organizational relationship between the various administrators and teachers who are involved in basic skills instruction. The relationship between the following types of roles should be reviewed: principal, district director of curriculum, district directors of secondary and elementary education, Title I and compensatory education coordinators and teachers.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
District director of curriculum
District director of elementary and
secondary education
Teachers
Board member
Superintendent

Materials

Job description
Organizational charts
Title I/State Compensatory Education Application
Policy statements

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Board of education policy assigns overall instructional leadership of the school to the principal.
2. The principal's job description includes responsibility for scheduling, program improvement, staff development and coordination of all basic skills programs in the school.
3. Responsibilities included in job descriptions of other administrative/supervisory staff in the district are not in conflict with those of the principal.
4. The principal's responsibilities are coordinated with the supervisors' responsibilities for basic skills (i.e., Title I/State Compensatory Education, reading, mathematics, bilingual).
5. The organizational roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for staff who impact on the basic skills program.
6. All staff who are providing instruction in basic skills report to the principal.
7. The district provides a formal structure for the principal's involvement in making decisions about students, staff, and program implementation at the school level and about policies, procedures and program structure district-wide.

170

Conclusions concerning the assigned instructional role of the principal:

Recommendations concerning the assigned instructional role of the principal:

I.B. DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Factor: I.B.1. The school and classrooms operate with a minimum amount of distraction, disruption and confusion.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

Not everyone will agree with what constitutes "good discipline" in the school and classroom. Some may argue this means students are always quiet, while others feel some noise and interaction between students is normal. When reviewing this factor, try to determine the degree to which student and staff behavior supports or detracts from instructional time and student motivation in the basic skills. Also, determine through interviews with staff whether the influence of drugs, alcohol, violence or vandalism in the school reduces the students' ability to concentrate on instruction.

Suggested Procedures

Team members should begin to collect information concerning this factor on the initial tour of the building and in subsequent classroom observations. The perceptions of a representative sample of teachers, students, parents and administrators should also be sought. Office records of suspensions, disciplinary actions, violence and vandalism should be reviewed, also.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Guidance counselors
Teachers
Aides
Students
Parents

Materials

Discipline referrals
Records of vandalism/violence
Suspension/expulsion records
Guidance records re: student use of drugs & alcohol

172

173

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

1. Discipline is not a problem in the classroom.
2. Discipline is not a problem in school corridors, cafeteria, auditorium, etc.
3. Vandalism is not a major problem in the school.
4. Violence is not a problem in the school.
5. The use of drugs and/or alcohol by students is not a problem.
6. Staff behavior in maintaining good discipline is firm positive and fair.

Conclusions concerning school discipline:

Recommendations concerning school discipline:

Factor: I.B.2. The district has developed, and the school board has approved, a student code of conduct and has established the rights and responsibilities of staff, students and parents in the implementation of the conduct code.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

This factor is only relevant if the school is experiencing an excessive amount of disruption, violence or vandalism. Studies have shown that the first step in reducing disruption in the school is to make clear the expected code of conduct. Such codes are most effective when they are short and developed with input from students, parents and staff. The code must be consistently and fairly applied to all students. It is important that students not involved in causing disruption not be penalized in an attempt to control other students. All staff should have responsibilities for maintaining order in the entire school.

Suggested Procedures

If disruptive conduct and vandalism seem to be major problems in the school, the team member should begin by obtaining a copy of the existing district and/or building code of conduct. Next, the team member should talk to administrators, teachers, custodians, lunch room aides and students to determine their knowledge of the existing code of conduct and implementation practices. Finally, the reviewer should talk to a sampling of parents concerning their perceptions of the safety and orderly operation of the school.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Students
Aides
Teachers
School nurse
Principal
Guidance personnel
Parents
Custodians
Community members in neighborhood
Police

Material

Code of conduct
Policies on student
behavior, discipline practices
Policies regarding rights and responsibilities
of staff, students and parents.

175

176

Indicators

Comments/Finding

1. The board of education has approved a code of conduct for students.
2. The rights and responsibilities of students, staff and parents have been defined in terms of maintaining discipline.
3. Students, staff and parents were involved in developing the code of conduct and in defining rights and responsibilities.
4. Students and parents have copies of the code, are familiar with and understand their rights and responsibilities.
5. The code of conduct is consistently and fairly applied to all students.
6. Students not involved in causing disruptions are not penalized in an attempt to control other students.
7. The code of conduct is simply stated and straight-forward.
8. Plans have been developed and implemented to reduce violence and/or vandalism.
9. The school works with other agencies to reduce incidents of violence and vandalism and the use of drugs and alcohol.
10. All staff have and assume responsibility for maintaining order in the entire school.

Conclusions concerning discipline policies and plans:

Recommendations concerning discipline policies and plans:

Factor: I.C.1. The board of education has a policy on staff development which covers in-service professional days, consultants and incentives.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

The team member is asked to collect information regarding the existence, staff knowledge of and actual implementation of district and/or school policies governing staff development activities. Consideration also needs to be given to staff perceptions about the adequacy of these policies and the opportunities they afford.

Suggested Procedures

Review any policy statements regarding staff development to determine what the district supports. Review in-service plans and agenda, records of staff use of professional days, attendance at special conferences and reimbursement records for staff taking courses, to determine whether the policies are being implemented. Discuss staff development policies with several staff members. Find out who is assigned responsibility for staff development at the district and/or school level. Do these people consider that the policies provide adequate incentives to staff development?

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers, classroom & supplemental
Aides
Principal
Basic skills supervisory staff

Materials

Copies of board of education policies
In-service plans and agenda
Staff records regarding use of
professional days

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. A policy exists which provides for a variety of staff development activities and incentives for staff involvement.
2. Staff is familiar enough with the policies and practices to take advantage of them and are motivated to do so.

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

- 3/ Someone has been assigned responsibility for managing staff development activities and he/she carries out that responsibility.

Conclusions concerning board of education policy on staff development:

Recommendations concerning board of education policy on staff development:

181

Factor: I.C.2. Staff development activities in basic skills are directly related to the skills and knowledge needed by the staff to implement the school's basic skills program and are part of a continuous problem-solving and school improvement process in the basic skills.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

In terms of basic skills achievement, it is important that there be adequate training in the basic skills program actually used in the classroom. Staff development activities should be based on the staff's analysis of strengths and weaknesses, should be part of a formal, on-going process of program improvement and should be periodically evaluated by the staff.

Suggested Procedures

Review written records of staff involvement in any basic skills staff development activity to determine the variety and frequency of these activities and the levels of staff participation. Interview staff at all levels to determine the accuracy of the records, staff perception of the value of those activities and the degree to which they support the program in use, or the program planned for use. Ask for examples of how the staff has applied its training to the actual classroom. Identify program improvement planning efforts such as the T & E committee, curriculum council, grade level meeting, etc.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers, classroom and supplemental
Aides
Principal
Basic skills supervisory staff

Materials

Copies of board of education policies
In-service plans and agenda staff
records regarding use of professional
days

Indicators

1. Teachers and principals help plan staff development activities in basic skills for individuals and/or groups.

Comments/Findings

Indicators

Comments/Findings

2. The staff development activities are consistent with the basic skills improvement objectives.
3. Staff development activities use the skills of professionals from within and outside the district.
4. In-service programs are conducted during school time and at school expense.
5. In-service programs are of sufficient length and quality to meet the identified needs of staff in basic skills.
6. Teachers are active participants in staff development activities.
7. Consultants, when used for in-service, gear their presentation to the needs of the staff.
8. Professional days are used by staff to expand their knowledge of basic skills instruction.
9. Teachers utilize the information and skills from staff development activities in the classroom.
10. Time is provided for grade level and cross-grade level meetings to discuss the implementation of the basic skills program.
11. The results of state and standardized test programs are discussed as they relate to program improvement.
12. Staff development activities are accompanied by on-going support from resource personnel.

184

Conclusions concerning staff development activities:

Recommendations concerning staff development activities:

Factor: I.D. There is a defined process for making decisions about the basic skills program, its improvement and policies which guide staff in the essential areas of decision making.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

As the team member reviews decision-making regarding the basic skills program and its improvement, he/she is asked to determine whether the policies:

- a. provide a formal decision-making structure
- b. make clear who makes what decisions
- c. ensure that decisions are based on the best program management information available to the staff at that time.

The team member is also asked to determine whether staff is knowledgeable about the policies, supports them and subsequently participates in decision-making activities.

Suggested Procedures

Identify the last major decision related to basic skills instruction and its improvement. Through interviews and the review of committee minutes, etc., determine how the decision was made and implemented. Also try to ascertain whether staff supports the decision. Confirm that the decision-making process was representative of most others.

Suggested Sources of Information

186

People

Principal
Basic skills supervisory staff
Teachers, classroom and supplemental

Materials

Policy statements
Minutes of committee meetings

187

1. Policies exist which provide a formal decision-making structure regarding basic skills program improvement.
2. Policies exist which provide for program decisions regarding:
 - a. the instructional content
 - b. the means used to achieve desired outcomes
 - c. the evaluation of pupil progress including the promotion and retention of students
 - d. specific procedures for meeting the special needs of some children (e.g., non-English proficient, mainstreamed special education students, gifted and talented, etc.)
 - e. the effective and efficient recording and reporting of pupil progress to students, staff and parents/community.
3. Staff generally support policies related to #2 above.
4. Decisions about changes in basic skills programs are based on an analysis of skill attainment, program strengths and weaknesses, teacher judgement and research findings about better ways of conducting the program. Also, those affected most by a decision are involved in making it. (Note: research findings include such things as time on task, discipline, absenteeism, role of the teacher and principal, etc.)

Indicators

Comments/Findings

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>5. The administrators and teachers in the school are involved in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. curriculum planning decisions b. textbook and material selection c. development of assessment and evaluation procedures d. determination of the improvement objectives e. determination of the criteria for grouping students for instruction f. development of the pupil progress recording and reporting system <p>6. Staff in general know about and support most of the major decisions regarding program improvement made over the last year or so.</p> | |
|---|--|

Conclusions concerning decision-making policies and practices:

Recommendations concerning decision-making policies and practices:

189

STAFF KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS
(PART II OF VI)

II. Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations

Researchers and educators have reasoned that what the school staff knows or feels or thinks may affect to some degree student learning of the basic skills. Centra and Potter (1977), however, point out that staff characteristics do not affect student learning directly. Knowledge, feelings, or understandings tend to influence staff behavior which, in turn, may affect student learning of the basics. Thus, for example, knowledge of reading content and teaching techniques may influence a teacher's behavior in structuring the instructional program. In this sense, staff characteristics may have an indirect, but, nevertheless, important effect on student learning.

A variety of alterable staff characteristics of this kind has been identified by researchers as important contributors to student learning. A teacher's knowledge of the content area he or she is responsible for teaching is one factor. The rationale is that the teacher who knows reading or math content is better able to teach it to students (Sidwell and Kasarda, 1975; Goodman, 1959; Hanushek, 1970). Further evidence of the importance of teacher knowledge of content area comes from a study comparing high and low performing schools (Delaware Department of Public Instruction, 1977). A salient characteristic of the teachers in high performing schools is their knowledge of the structure and substance of the subject being taught.

The teacher's attitudes toward the nature and quality of the basic skills instructional program are another factor that may influence student learning. This factor might be defined as the extent of teacher agreement with the overall basic skills philosophy of the school, the goals of instruction, the instructional content and methods, and the measures of achievement. In effect, the underlying rationale is that student learning may be enhanced if the teacher's attitudes are positive toward the school's instructional policies and program requirements. Research supporting this factor is reported by the Delaware Department of Public Instruction (1977).

Teacher expectations about student learning are another characteristic that has received considerable attention in the research literature (Brophy and Good, 1972; Pidgeon, 1970; Rosenthal and Jacobsen, 1968). The theory is that the teacher's expectations about student abilities to learn may affect the teacher's behavior in the classroom. As an example, teachers may direct most of their attention and provide most rewards to students they believe are fast learners (Rist, 1973). The research generally suggests that student learning will be enhanced if teachers assume all students are capable of mastering the basic skills instruction provided in the school. A related point is that teachers in high performing schools tend to avoid negative labeling of students and use positive rather than negative techniques to motivate students to learn (Medley, 1978; Harris and Serwer, 1966; Brophy and Evertron, 1974; Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974).

The principal is typically a dominant force in the school environment, and his/her role in influencing student learning has captured the interest of researchers. Chester et al. (1975) identify two different roles a principal might play: a) an administrative role designed to achieve a smoothly running organization, and b) a professional role concerned with improving classroom processes, encouraging teacher growth, and continually

evaluating pupil learning. The professionally-oriented principal expresses more concern about instruction than administration, communicates views about instruction, assumes responsibility for instructional decisions, coordinates instructional programs, emphasizes academic standards, meets regularly with teachers to discuss classroom activities, acts as a disciplinarian, rates staff highly, and has positive perceptions of personal rapport with teachers, parents, and pupils. (Key, 1972; Wellisch, MacQueen, Carriere, & Duck, 1978; Weber, 1971; State of New York, 1974; Edwards, 1978; Brookover and Lezotte, 1977; Austin, 1978; Irvine, 1979). In short, all the above research indicates that professionally-oriented principals are more effective in increasing student achievement than principals who have other priorities, attitudes, and values.

Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations

Summary of Variables

- A. Teacher Knowledge of Instructional Content - The staff is knowledgeable about the structure and substance of the reading and math content they are responsible for teaching.
- B. Staff Attitudes Toward the Basic Skills Program - The staff agrees with the overall priority placed on basic skills instruction, the goals of the program, and the content and methods used.
- C. Principals' Attitudes Toward their Role - Principals place high priority on the role of instructional leadership, and play an active professional role in the basic skills program of the school.
- D. Staff Expectations About Student Learning - Administrators and teachers believe all students are capable of mastering the basic skills, avoid the use of negative labels for students, and use positive techniques (e.g., rewards and praise) to motivate students to learn.

II.A. TEACHER KNOWLEDGE OF INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

Factor: II.A. Teachers have sufficient knowledge to implement effectively the school's basic skills program.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

"Sufficient knowledge" of the Basic Skills Program is defined here as knowledge of:

the district and school policies and procedures related to the developmental and compensatory basic skills programs.

the district structure and substance of the subject matter (i.e., math or reading).

the various staff members' teaching and administrative/supervisory roles and responsibilities in the instructional process.

Suggested Procedures

Review policies regarding program structure and implementation, sample staff college transcripts, job descriptions, staff in-service agenda and staff meeting agenda to determine what information staff has received. Interview staff and administrative/supervisory staff to determine: 1) its perceptions of staff roles; 2) the relationship of various teaching and administrative/supervisory staff involved in the basic skills program; 3) the degree to which staff development activities are meeting its needs; and 4) its satisfaction with its own professional preparation. Observe a wide range of classroom instructional situations to determine the techniques used for presenting the content to students of varied levels of development.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Basic skills supervisory staff
Resource teachers
Classroom teachers

Materials

Policy statements
Job descriptions
Staff meeting agenda and minutes
Staff in-service descriptions and/or agenda
Sample staff transcripts

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

1. Written policies and procedures are available and staff is knowledgeable of them.
2. Undergraduate and graduate preparation of staff has been adequate for implementing its roles in basic skills instruction.
3. Staff development activities are conducted to enhance content knowledge and instructional techniques in response to identified needs.
4. Teachers have been trained to use the materials provided for basic skills instruction and indicate the training has been adequate.
5. Teachers have sufficient knowledge of testing to use test results effectively in planning basic skills instruction.
6. Teachers are knowledgeable of various roles and responsibilities of staff assigned to implement the basic skills program. Teachers are also knowledgeable of how instructional resources and supervisory roles are interrelated.

Conclusions concerning the overall level of teacher knowledge:**1. Reading**

2. Math

Recommendations concerning the overall level of teacher knowledge:

1. Reading

2. Math

199

II.B. STAFF ATTITUDES TOWARD THE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM

Factor: II.B. Teachers have positive attitudes toward basic skills instruction.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

As a factor, teachers' attitudes toward the basic skills program focuses on the degree to which teachers agree with essential elements of the basic skills program (i.e., agreement with philosophy and policies governing the basic skills program, the goals and objectives of instruction, the instructional materials and methods, the standards and measures of achievement utilized and the form of remediation).

Suggested Procedures

Informal meetings with small groups of staff may provide the best setting for addressing this factor. Staff attitudes may be observed; reasons for these attitudes may be discussed with the staff. Also, try to determine the degree to which the school provides opportunities for staff to share ideas related to the program, its structure and its improvement.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Teachers
Basic skills supervisory staff
Students

Materials

Records of staff involvement in basic skills
program development and improvement activities

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Teachers agree that the overall emphasis the school places on basic skills instruction is appropriate.
2. Teachers accept the objectives of the basic skills program as something which can be achieved and inclusive of what students need to learn.

- | Indicators | Comments/Findings |
|--|-------------------|
| 3. Teachers feel that the staff has made a strong effort to achieve the objectives of the basic skills program. | |
| 4. Teachers feel the measures of student performance in basic skills used by the school are fair and valid in:
a. mathematics
b. reading | |
| 5. Teachers believe that the instructional methods used in the school are appropriate in:
a. mathematics
b. reading | |
| 6. Teachers believe the school has a well coordinated program in:
a. mathematics
b. reading | |
| 7. Teachers feel that adequate provisions are made for remediation in:
a. mathematics
b. reading | |
| 8. Teachers feel they are adequately involved in decisions related to basic skills instruction. | |

202

Indicators

Comments/Findings

9. Teachers feel they are provided adequate support through:

- in-service training
- instructional leadership
- resource staff
- basic material
- supplemental materials
- library/media services
- supplemental staff
- scheduling
- other

Conclusions concerning the overall attitudes of the staff toward the basic skills program:

1. Reading

2. Math

Recommendations concerning the overall attitudes of the staff toward the basic skills program:

1. Reading

2. Math

204

II.C. PRINCIPAL'S ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS/HER ROLE

Factor: II.C. The principal provides strong instructional leadership in basic skills.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Research indicates that the principal is a key factor in the success or failure of the instructional program. His/her ability to influence the program falls into two categories. First, the principal's authority to act as the instructional leader in his/her school as addressed in IA.2 (District policy assigns overall instructional leadership responsibility to the principal). Second is the principal's implementation of that leadership role. In addressing this research factor there is a need to analyze the principal's administrative role as well as the instructional leadership role. Research indicates a positive impact on the basic skills program occurs when the principal emphasizes an instructional leadership role.

"Strong instructional leadership" includes the following attributes:

- . Communicates to staff, students and community the importance of basic skills achievement
- . Sets a positive and supportive environment for instruction with staff, students and parents
- . Plays an active role in observing, discussing and coordinating the instructional program
- . Assumes responsibility for instructional decisions and program planning and improvement
- . Monitors student achievement

Suggested Procedures

Several written materials may serve as indicators that the principal is in fact assuming an instructional leadership role, (i.e., staff meeting agenda which focuses on basic skills program discussions and decisions, in-service emphasis on basic skills improvement, newsletters to parents and community, staff observations concerning principal's role and related program improvement plans). Interviews with the principal, basic skills supervisory staff, teachers, students and parents will help to determine what the principal's role is in leading and improving basic skills.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
District level administrators
District basic skills supervisory staff
Teachers
Students
Parents

Materials

Staff meeting agenda
Inservice agenda
Newsletter to parents and community
Staff observations concerning principal's role
Related program improvement plans
Committee reports
School basic skills budget requests

1. The principal places priority on teaching reading and mathematics to all students.
2. The principal places greater emphasis in terms of his/her time on instructional rather than on administrative tasks.
3. The principal has adequate knowledge of basic skills instruction and the specific school program to provide leadership in instruction.
4. The principal has adequate knowledge of the basic skills program as it relates to students of limited English proficiency or with a native language other than English.
5. The principal has responsibility for coordinating the developmental, compensatory, bilingual and ESL programs in the school.
6. The principal ensures that good discipline is maintained in the school.
7. The principal reviews lesson plans to ensure that instruction addresses identified improvement objectives related to skill attainment and student needs.
8. The principal regularly visits classrooms to observe reading and mathematics instruction.
9. The principal discusses with teachers his/her observations concerning basic skills instruction.
10. The principal believes that all students can learn basic skills.
11. The principal uses the results of basic skills assessment to guide the staff in program planning.

207

Indicators	Comments/Findings
12. The principal meets regularly with teachers to discuss the implementation of the basic skills plan. 13. The principal provides support for the basic skills program through budget requests and allocations. 14. The principal provides adequate staff development experiences in basic skills to address the needs of staff.	

Conclusions concerning the principal's attitude towards his/her role:

Recommendations concerning the principal's attitude towards his/her role:

II.D. STAFF EXPECTATIONS ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING

Factor: II.D. Administrators, guidance counselors and teachers have high expectations for students' learning and mastery of the basic skills.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Key considerations include: a) staff demonstration of high expectations for all students; b) emphasis on positive rather than negative motivation; c) equal effort to instruct all students regardless of learning level or style and; d) student perception that all of the above are true.

Suggested Procedures

This factor addresses a basic educational belief. As such, it tends to illicit "right" responses. It may be helpful to the team member to collect information informally through:

- . small group discussion with staff and students
- . classroom observations
- . review of student work
- . review of student grading procedures/criteria actually used by staff
- . review of guidance and counseling services for evidence that all students are provided with equal opportunity, access and support

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Administrators
Guidance counselors
Students

Materials

Student work
Classroom and hallway displays of student work
Grading criteria and procedures (district, school
and/or individual staff member)
Student record folders

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. The school has written basic skills standards which reflect high expectations for all students.
2. Teachers indicate a belief that all the students in their classroom can master basic skills.
3. Administrators and guidance counselors indicate a belief that all the students in their school can master basic skills.
4. Basic skills classroom teachers perceive that they have the major responsibility for the instructional program of every child.
5. Teachers give equal attention to all learners in the classroom regardless of learning level, style or special needs. Equal attention includes such things as: time, kind of student/teacher interaction, positive support, etc.
6. Teachers avoid negatively labeling students.
7. Teachers use positive techniques (e.g. rewards, praise) to motivate students to learn.
8. Students indicate teachers believe in their ability to learn the basic skills.

Conclusions concerning the overall expectations of staff about student learning:

Recommendations concerning the overall expectations of staff about student learning:

212

READING BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM
(PART III OF VI)

213

III. Basic Skills Program

Reading

Much research has been done concerning instruction in the basic skills. What emerges is a consistent pattern of findings that supports curriculum which include the following interrelated elements:

1. Expected outcomes - Sequenced skill arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels.
2. Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
3. Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he/she has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
4. Record keeping system - The student record keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. The system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school within the district where there is high mobility of students. (Cooley and Leinhardt, 1975; Harris and Serwer, 1966; Pidgeon, 1970; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Education Programs that Work, USOE, 1978; Brophy and Evertson 1974; Tikunoff, Berlinger and Rist, 1975; Bond and Dyskstra, 1967; Michigan Department of Education, 1976; Edmonds, 1978; Bloom, 1980.)

Many programs incorporate these elements. Some of the most common labels include aligned curriculum, Right-to-Read, diagnostic/prescriptive, mastery learning, structured and continuous progress. There are hundreds of specific programs with these characteristics which research has shown to be effective. The major characteristic of these programs is the concept of taking the individual student through a sequenced set of learning outcomes at a rate consistent with his/her ability. The assumption is made that the student learns a higher level skill following mastery of a lower skill. This approach differs from grade level oriented programs which focus on the skills expected to be learned by the average student in a given grade.

Essential to the successful implementation of the curriculum component are the coordination and integration of instruction in basic skills both horizontally and vertically. The management design must draw together all personnel, materials and services (regardless of funding sources) in a uniform basic skills effort across all grade levels. The management design focuses on a developmental program aimed at reducing the need for remediation. Remediation services (Title I, State Compensatory Education, volunteer services, child study

teams, etc.) are closely coordinated with the developmental program. The classroom teacher is the manager of the child's program. All structural elements of the district's organization and all curricular components of the instructional program are centered on the primacy of the classroom teacher's role (Brinson, 1980).

The aligned curriculum approach does not require one-to-one instruction; however, it does require individualized planning and record keeping. Students may still be taught in groups, but frequent assessment of progress is used to regroup students based on current needs. The most effective grouping has the leader working with small groups of three to seven or large groups of eight or more in some situations. Children working alone or with one or two other children and one teacher is negatively correlated with achievement (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974; Soar, 1973).

The behavior exhibited by teachers forms the group rules by which instruction and interaction occur in the classroom. Research concludes that effective teachers provide strong leadership by directing activities in a business-like way, as they manage the tasks and interactions of the classroom (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974; Soar 1973; Solomon and Kendall 1976). High achievement is more likely when teachers select the focus of the activities and apply appropriate principles of learning.

Achievement is lower in classes having a large amount of unsupervised seat work (Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Soar, 1973; and Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974). Moreover, effective teachers occupy the central role in the classroom and organize learning around questions which they pose. Inherent in management techniques of these teachers is the ability to maintain an intermediate position with respect to classroom control. Effective management in program improvement uses varied methods of control as opposed to a self-defeating management style based purely on criticism and rigidity (Soar, 1977). A well-managed classroom is one in which conditions for constructive rather than disruptive, deviate behavior prevail (Soar, 1973; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Bemis and Luft, 1970; Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976).

Another subject of study has been compensatory programs in basic skills. Schools have the option of serving the remedial needs of students in the regular classroom or in separate classes. In the regular classroom, the student to adult ratio is reduced, usually by adding a remedial teacher or aide for part of the day. However, some schools schedule those students, not needing remediation, for other activities during the school day, leaving the regular classroom teacher with fewer students for remediation.

The other option for remediation is the use of "pull-out." Students in need of remediation are sent to separate remedial classes for part of the day. Research has shown that "pull-out" as a method of remediation results in the negative labeling of many students. Teachers view these students as less capable and, consequently, lower their expectations for them. Lower teacher expectations, therefore, result in lower levels of student achievement. Another problem with "pull-out" is the frequent lack of coordination of teaching strategies, between the teacher and the special teacher, for the child's basic skills improvement plan. This results, then, in the student spending less time on tasks designed to correct basic skills deficiencies. Further, there is a consistent negative relationship between the time pupils spend in "pull-out" classes and reading and mathematics achievement (Glass and Smith, 1977).

Basic Skills Program Mathematics

Summary of Variables

A. The Developmental Instructional Program

The planned and classroom implemented curriculum includes the following aligned and interrelated elements:

- . Expected outcomes - Sequenced skill arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels and are related to the standardized tests used in the district.
- . Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- . Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- . Record-keeping system The student record-keeping format is based on the concept of the continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. Within a district where there is high mobility of students, the system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school.

B. Compensatory Reading:

- . Supports the developmental program.
- . If remediation takes place through "pull-out", the negative effects are minimized.
- . If remediation takes place in the classroom, provision is made for adequate services for all students need remediation.

C. Instructional management includes:

- . classroom teacher-managed instruction
- . strong direct leadership by teachers
- . flexible grouping of students based on assessed learner needs
- . positive methods of control
- . in-class compensatory education
- . lack of classroom disruption

III.A. DEVELOPMENTAL READING

Factor: III.A.1 Teachers have and use clearly defined and sequenced outcomes of instruction such as a skills array or objectives

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Factors A.1-A.5 in this section are highly interrelated. It is essential that there be congruence between the objectives of learning, instruction, assessment and record keeping. Determining clearly what is to be learned is the first step in this sequence. The team member is asked to determine whether or not the school has formally defined expected outcomes and the degree to which they are used by the classroom teachers in directing instruction.

Suggested Procedures

Determine whether or not a skills array/objectives has been adopted for the reading program and secure copies for your review. Determine what level of involvement reading staff had in the selection or development of the skills array/objectives. Through interviews and classroom observations determine whether the skills array/objectives are used to guide instruction.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Reading coordinator
Teacher

Materials

Curriculum guides
Skills array/objectives
Lesson plans

Indicators

Comments/Findings

220

1. There is a skill array in reading which actually guides instruction across all grade levels.
2. The classroom teachers and specialists support the skills array as what should be taught.

221

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. Classroom teachers and specialists base instruction on the same skills array. 4. If there is a high degree of student mobility between schools in the district, there is one skills array used to guide reading instruction in all schools.	

Conclusions concerning existence and use of a skill array or instructional objectives:

Recommendations concerning existence and use of skills array/objectives:

Factor: III.A.2. Classroom instructional materials, teaching strategies and student activities in reading are directly referenced to the skills array in all classrooms and are sufficient in quantity and variety to respond to the learning needs of all children.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

This factor asks first whether the instructional materials and activities have been directly coded or referenced to the skills array; second, whether the related materials and activities are used in actual classroom practice and, finally, the degree to which the materials and instructional activities give all children a chance to successfully learn essential reading skills.

Suggested Procedures

The focus of this section is to determine whether the material and instructional activities are matched to the learning outcomes as defined and assessed. Most teachers rely heavily on the textbook series and supplement it with other activities and material. However, many schools also have a curriculum guide which describes the approved program. The team member needs to look at what is supposed to be the "official" curriculum and what is actually the "in use" curriculum, and the degree to which it reflects the skills array/objectives.

The team member should determine if the skills array/objectives are used as a criteria for selecting new textbooks or materials.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Reading coordinators

Material

Curriculum guides
Textbooks
Supplemental materials

223

224

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Basic text materials have been analyzed and correlated to the skills array in a manner which facilitates their use by teachers and identifies mismatches or omissions in skill development.

Indicators

Comments/Findings

2. There are adequate supplementary materials to support instruction in specific skills, particularly those skills identified as in need of improvement.
3. The materials are geared to the ability levels of the students, appropriate for the interests and age levels of the students and responsive to special learning needs (such as students with limited English proficiency).
4. Reading skills are incorporated in other subject areas.
5. The levels of the reading material in the classrooms are appropriate for the general reading levels of the students in the school.
6. The reading levels of textbooks used in other courses are appropriate for the general reading levels of the students in the school.
7. The need of students of limited English proficiency or with another native language has been considered in selecting textbooks for all courses.
8. School media resources are available to support the instructional program in reading.
9. The resources of the school library are adequate to support the reading program.
10. Districts with a high degree of student mobility between schools coordinate the curriculum across all schools.
11. The school curriculum is coordinated with sending and receiving schools.

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

- | | |
|---|--|
| 12. The remedial services are part of the overall reading curriculum of the school. | |
|---|--|

Conclusions concerning instructional materials and procedures:

Recommendations concerning instructional materials and procedures:

226

Factor: III.A.3. Classroom instructional materials, teaching strategies and student activities in early childhood programs are consistent with the developmental level of the pupils.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

There is often conflict between pressure to produce formal instructional gains at an early age and the readiness of young children. Appropriate principles of learning must be applied to the younger students who are bound by developmental factors sometimes overlooked in planning instructional strategies and activities. Unsound practices are detrimental to the attainment of desired skills or have negative side effects.

Suggested Procedures

Determine who in authority has knowledge of and interest in the needs of the younger student and discuss the early childhood program with that person. Visit the pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and primary grade classrooms to assess the appropriateness of the activities.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Teachers
Nurse
Parents

Materials

Lessons plans
Curriculum guides
SCE/Title I/Follow Through application

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Pre-school, kindergarten and first grade students are screened for potential learning difficulties in the following areas:

- visual acuity and perception
- auditory acuity and discrimination
- visual and auditory memory
- speech and language development
- psychomotor abilities

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

2. There is follow-up on identified areas of weakness.
3. The daily schedule or classroom structure makes provision for alternate active and quiet activities.
4. Students are provided with a variety of hands-on experiences and activities to facilitate the development of communication, quantitative reasoning and problem-solving skills.
5. Students are provided options in the selection of activities and materials to develop decision-making skills and to allow for individual interests and different learning styles.
6. Students are provided opportunities to communicate through a variety of media and their products are prominently displayed.

Conclusions concerning early childhood programs:

229

Recommendations concerning early childhood programs:

Factor: III.A.4. Assessment procedures used in the school for assessing specific achievements and needs of students in reading are based on the skills array and the actual material covered in the classrooms.

Considerations in Reviewing This Factor

The team member is asked to confirm that the assessment instrument and procedures are based on the skills array and classroom instruction. This requires looking at the total student evaluation design including such things as teacher-made tests, district/school standardized testing, MBS test usage and any other sources used by teachers to measure pupils' progress.

Suggested Procedures

Make a determination, through interviews with central and school staff assigned to the MBS test administration and/or locally selected test administration, as to what efforts were made to analyze the tests and other indicators of pupil progress to determine their validity as measures of the instructional program. Find out if an individual or group has been assigned responsibility for analyzing and communicating the findings regarding the alignment of instruction and assessment. Where possible, take a random sample of objectives and ask staff to demonstrate how they assess these items.

Sources of Information

People

Central staff
Principals
Teachers

Materials

MBS test printouts
Report of MBS test results to
board of education
Agenda for staff meeting on MBS tests results
Report of locally selected test results

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Staff formally matched pupil progress assessment procedures to the skills array/objectives including:
 - a. MBS test items
 - b. the school standardized testing program items

Indicators

Comments/Findings

- c. teacher-made tests
 - d. means of assessment used by staff other than tests to measure pupil progress on the skills array.
2. The MBS test has been analyzed to determine which skills on the district's skills array have been mastered and which need additional emphasis.
 3. The results of the MBS tests, the district's standardized tests and other tests have been analyzed to determine skill mastery level for all students, including those of limited English proficiency.
 4. Teachers use the results of student assessment to plan instruction.
 5. Standardized assessment instruments have been analyzed to determine if the material covered on the tests is being taught at the appropriate time in the classrooms.
 6. Reports of the results of the MBS test and the school's standardized testing program reflecting individual and group data are distributed to all staff for instructional and program planning purposes.
 7. Classroom assessment results are used to guide instruction.
 8. Students are grouped for instruction based on current identified needs.
 9. Parents and students know the objectives of the program and the individual student's mastery level.

Conclusions concerning the record keeping system:

Recommendations concerning the record keeping system:

234

Factor: III.A.5. There is a classroom record keeping and reporting system which tracks the progress of of students based on the defined learning outcomes in reading across all grade levels and allows for frequent feedback to the students, parents and teacher on the progress of students at all grade levels.

Considerations in Reviewing This Factor

The reviewer is asked to determine whether:

- a. the record keeping system reflects the skills array/objectives
- b. the teachers use the recorded information for instructional and program management purposes, and
- c. the reporting system ensures that parents and students know the objectives of the reading program and the student's progress toward achieving them.

Suggested Procedures

Request samples of the record keeping and reporting materials used in the district and school. Determine if there is a correlation between the school skills array, the skills assessed, skills recorded and reported and textbook used for instruction. There should be consistency within and across grade levels. Skills need to be identified in some way as having been introduced, mastered and reinforced.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Supervisor(s)
Principal
Resource staff
Teachers

Materials

Student record cards
Individual teacher records
Skills arrays
Curriculum guides

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

1. The school's skills array is used as the basis of a standardized record keeping system which tracks the progress of students in the classroom and across grade levels.
2. When the district has high student mobility between schools, there is a standard record keeping system district-wide which allows for tracking of student progress between schools.

Conclusions concerning student record keeping:

Recommendations concerning student record keeping:

237

III.B. COMPENSATORY READING

Factor: III.B.1. The developmental reading program in the classroom is viewed as the major component of the reading program and the compensatory instruction supports the basic program.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Compensatory instruction, to be meaningful, needs to be an extension of the developmental program. The classroom teacher needs to be assigned the primary role in the management of the student's program. The team member is asked to determine the relationship between the developmental and the compensatory programs. Selection of students for supplemental services must be based on need and the services must be designed to support the student's on-going developmental program. Teachers in developmental and compensatory programs should jointly plan and monitor each student's progress.

Suggested Procedures

The major focus of the team member should be to determine if the supplemental compensatory services are a planned and implemented extension of the developmental program. Examine the applications for Title I and State Compensatory Education funds to determine the relationship between both programs. Try to find evidence that regular classroom teachers and compensatory reading teachers jointly plan student instruction to insure that the individual needs of the student are addressed and instruction is coordinated to provide a continuous learning experience for each student. Also determine the degree to which teachers share information about a student's progress as a basis for reviewing and planning that child's program through the year.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Program administrators
Supervisory staff
Principal
Teachers, regular and supplemental

Materials

Compensatory Education/Title I applications
ASSA report and back-up data
Assessment documents

1. The classroom teachers are assigned primary responsibility for the reading program of their students.
2. The classroom teacher coordinates the instruction and assists in identifying students requiring services.
3. The same skills array is used in planning compensatory instruction as in the developmental program.
4. The materials used for compensatory instruction are coordinated with the materials used in the developmental program.
5. The assessment procedures used for compensatory services are coordinated with those used in the developmental program.
6. The compensatory staff uses the same record keeping system as is used in the developmental program.
7. Compensatory staff keep the classroom teacher informed of student progress on a regular basis.
8. Classroom teachers and compensatory staff meet regularly to discuss coordination of programs and individual student progress.
9. Students of limited English proficiency in need of compensatory education are served in programs where their individual needs are addressed.
10. All students needing supplemental compensatory instruction are receiving such instruction.
10. All students needing supplemental compensatory instruction are receiving such instruction.

240

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>11. Classroom aides are used to free the teacher to devote more time to students with deficiencies.</p> <p>12. Classroom aides are adequately supervised by the teacher.</p> | |
|---|--|

Conclusions concerning compensatory instruction as supportive of the developmental program:

Recommendations concerning compensatory instruction as supportive of the developmental program:

Factor: III.B.2. If remediation takes place through "pull-out" in reading the negative effects of "pull-out," such as negative student labeling, reduced time-on-task and disruption of the regular program are avoided.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Removing students from the regular classroom environment to provide compensatory instruction has been shown to have negative effects on learning such as labeling, fragmented instruction, and reduced time-on-task. The team member is asked to determine what efforts have been made to avoid these negative effects. The team member is also asked to determine the degree to which negative effects have actually accrued.

Suggested Procedures

Interview students and staff and, when possible, parents to determine whether they view the program as having a positive or negative effect on the student and his/her learning. Review the organizational structure and scheduling of "pull-out" classes to determine whether significant amounts of instructional time are lost to student movement or disruption of regular classroom instruction. Ask students and staff to describe a typical day; where possible, actually track a student's involvement in the "pull-out" program vis-a-vis the regular classroom reading instruction.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Parents
Students

Materials

Lesson plans
Student/class schedules

Indicators

Comments/Findings

- 242 1. The negative labeling of students requiring remediation is avoided by other students, teachers and administrators.
2. The compensatory "pull-out" program actually results in increased time in reading instruction.

243

Indicators

Comments/Findings

3. The classroom teacher continues to have the primary responsibility for student instruction in reading.
4. Classroom teachers are included in planning the form of compensatory service to be provided for their students.
5. The classroom teachers support the "pull-out" program in preference to other forms of assistance for their students.
6. Student participation in the "pull-out" program does not prevent them from participating in other important instructional programs.
7. Student participation in the "pull-out" program, does not prevent them from participating in activities which motivate students (i.e. recess, lunch, art, physical education).

Conclusions concerning the use of a "pull-out" program, if applicable:

Recommendations concerning the use of a "pull-out" program, if applicable:

245

Factor: III.B.3. If remediation takes place in the classroom, the classroom teacher and identifies students requiring services and coordinates the instruction.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

The team member reviewing this factor needs to determine whether the classroom teacher is:

- a. actually involved in identifying students who need compensatory instruction
- b. formally recognized as the manager of compensatory instruction in his/her classroom

The team member is also asked to confirm that the classroom teacher carries out his/her role by ensuring that compensatory instruction in the classroom is different from, but supportive of the regular instructional program and that the instruction responds to the specific learning deficiencies of the individual student.

Suggested Procedures

Review written information such as the job description and categorical remedial plans (e.g., Title I and Compensatory Education) to determine who is assigned responsibility for coordinating the program in the classroom and for identifying students who should be serviced by the program. Discuss with the principal, reading coordinator and teachers their perceptions of whether classroom teachers have this responsibility.

Observe classroom activities, review lesson plans and talk with teachers and aides to determine what is taught and how the compensatory instruction is supplemental to and coordinated with the regular classroom instruction of participating students.

The concept of teacher coordination of the program also implies that teachers play an active role in ensuring a smooth transition for students from one grade to another based on accurate and detailed record keeping. Also that teachers should have a role in planning the overall structure and operational plan of the compensatory program.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Classroom and remedial teachers
Principal
Classroom aides
Reading Coordinator
Students

Materials

Job descriptions
Lesson plans
Recordkeeping
Title I and compensatory Education plans

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. The classroom teacher is assigned responsibility for coordinating the programs in his/her classroom.
2. The classroom teacher is actively involved in the identification of students who need compensatory services.
3. During the compensatory instruction the adult to student ratio:
 - a. allows for remediation of specific learning deficiencies
 - b. allows for a significant increase in individual student time-on-task.
4. Aides/volunteers are used in the classroom to free the teacher to devote more time to students with deficiencies.
5. Classroom aides/volunteers are adequately supervised by the teacher.
6. Each student has an individual record which describes his/her progress. When a student changes grades or schools, this record forms the basis for planning a continuation of the student's program.
7. The classroom teacher actively participates in school/district decisions about what will be taught, how the program will operate, and how the program may be improved.

248

Conclusions concerning the classroom teacher's role in coordinating in-classroom compensatory instruction:

Recommendations concerning the classroom teacher's role in coordinating in-classroom compensatory instruction:

III.C. MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL AND COMPENSATORY READING INSTRUCTION

| Factor: III.C.1. There is a written plan which guides basic skills instruction. |

Considerations for Reviewing This Factor

The district plan for basic skills instruction should be a written plan which includes, but is not necessarily limited to: a) a definition of a developmental program, b) a definition of compensatory services, c) a projection of staff development activities for the year based on identified needs, d) program improvement objectives and, e) clearly defined lines of responsibility. The team member is asked to determine the plan's existence and the degree to which it has been implemented.

Suggested Procedures

Identify and secure a copy of the written plan for reading instruction and review it to determine the degree to which it provides a clear definition of a coordinated program, roles and responsibilities of administrative, supervisory and instructional staff, and the identification of program and staff improvement activities. Observe classrooms and review lesson plans, inservice agenda, and basic skills improvement activities to determine the degree to which the plan is being implemented. This information can be collected at the same time information is collected for IV A, B.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Reading coordinators
Principals
Students

Materials

Basic skills plan
Lesson plans
Inservice agenda
Basic skills committee agenda
Minutes from staff meetings such as T & E,
department or grade level meetings

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. There is a written basic skills plan.
2. The plan is being implemented by the staff.
3. The plan has a management design which draws together all personnel, materials and services (regardless of funding sources) in a uniform basic skills effort across all grade levels.
4. The management of the basic skills instruction focuses on the developmental program.
5. The principal is assigned the overall responsibility for the basic skills instruction in the school.
6. The classroom teacher is given the management responsibility for the student's basic skills program.
7. The structured elements of the district's organization and all curricular components of the instructional program center on the primacy of the classroom teacher's role.
8. There are clear lines of responsibility concerning basic skills instruction in the school and in the district.
9. Improvement objectives for mathematics instruction have been established and communicated to staff, students and parents and focus on such improvements as:
 - a. reducing the number of students needing compensatory services
 - b. ameliorating identified program weaknesses

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

c. emphasizing/reinforcing the specific skills with which many students have difficulty.

d. including the interim objectives resulting from MBS testing and T&E basic skills planning.

10. Staff development activities are targeted at identified needs and are perceived by staff as responsive to those needs.

Conclusions concerning the basic skills plan:

Recommendations concerning the basic skills plan:

254

Factor: III.C.2. There are individual instructional plans for each student who achieves below the state standard in reading at the sixth grade level or above.
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Consideration for Reviewing this Factor

The team member is asked to: a) confirm the existence of individual instructional plans for students requiring remediation and, b) determine whether the plan provides instructional direction for the developmental program and compensatory services.

Suggested Procedures

Ask to see the package of student plans in a sample of classes having remedial students. Review a random sample of student plans and folders to determine what is included. Talk to teachers to determine who has responsibility for developing student plans and carrying them out. Also try to determine the degree to which student plans are implemented as needed, and the degree to which student plans are adjusted based on a continuing assessment of student needs.

Sources of Information

People

Reading coordinator
Classroom teachers
Supplemental teachers
Students

Materials

Student folders used for recording
student needs, activities and reporting
progress of lesson plans

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. A staff member has been assigned responsibility for developing an instructional plan for each student who failed to meet the state standard in reading at the sixth grade level and above.	
2. A written plan for each eligible student exists.	
3. Student plans are based on formal diagnostic data.	

Indicators

Comments/Findings

4. Student plans include:
 - a. specific areas of need/desired outcomes
 - b. activities targeted at meeting those needs
 - c. a system for evaluating student progress
 - d. a system for reporting progress to students, parents and staff.
5. A staff member has been assigned responsibility for the overall instructional reading program for each student who failed to meet the state standard in reading at the sixth grade level or above.

Conclusions concerning individual plans for students needing remediation:

Recommendations concerning individual plans for students needing remediation:

257

Factor: III.C.3. Teachers provide strong leadership in the classroom.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Strong leadership is defined in this factor as the teacher's ability to:

- a. effectively manage classroom organization and instruction
- b. establish a positive and business-like environment
- c. determine the foci of instructional activities and apply appropriate principles of learning.

Reviewers are asked to identify evidence of these characteristics in the classroom. (Note: The team member is asked to ensure that every teacher involved in basic skills instruction is visited and/or interviewed during the team's stay in the school. To observe all basic skills teachers, the team member may want to ask other team members to assist in making observations.

Suggested Procedures

Classroom observations and interviews form the basis of information on this factor. It is important that the team members share their perceptions and establish inter-observer consistency before making generalized statements.

Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Principal
Reading supervisor

Materials

Job description
Basic skills
supplemental instruction plans

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Teachers effectively manage tasks and interactions in the classroom.
2. Teachers group students for instruction based on clearly identified criteria (i.e., skill attainment, interests, learning style).

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. Teachers adequately supervise seat work. 4. Teachers use positive reinforcement to motivate students. 5. The climate in the classroom is positive and supportive of the educational process. 6. Teachers determine what is to be taught, the most appropriate way instruction should be carried out for each child and when student instructional plans should be modified.	

Conclusions concerning teacher leadership in the classroom:

Recommendations concerning teacher leadership in the classroom:

260

MATHEMATICS BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM
(PART IV OF VI)

IV. Basic Skills Program

Mathematics

Much research has been done concerning instruction in the basic skills. What emerges is a consistent pattern of findings that supports curriculum which include the following interrelated elements:

1. Expected outcomes - Sequenced skill arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels.
2. Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
3. Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he/she has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
4. Record keeping system - The student record keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. The system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school within the district where there is high mobility of students. (Cooley and Leinhardt, 1975; Harris and Server, 1966; Pidgeon, 1970; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Education Programs that Work, USOE, 1978; Brophy and Evertson 1974; Tikunoff, Berlinger and Rist, 1975; Bond and Dyskstra, 1967; Michigan Department of Education, 1976; Edmonds, 1978; Bloom, 1980.)

Many programs incorporate these elements. Some of the most common labels include aligned curriculum, Right-to-Read, diagnostic/prescriptive, mastery learning, structured and continuous progress. There are hundreds of specific programs with these characteristics which research has shown to be effective. The major characteristic of these programs is the concept of taking the individual student through a sequenced set of learning outcomes at a rate consistent with his/her ability. The assumption is made that the student learns a higher level skill following mastery of a lower skill. This approach differs from grade level oriented programs which focus on the skills expected to be learned by the average student in a given grade.

Essential to the successful implementation of the curriculum component are the coordination and integration of instruction in basic skills both horizontally and vertically. The management design must draw together all personnel, materials and services (regardless of funding sources) in a uniform basic skills effort across all grade levels. The management design focuses on a developmental program aimed at reducing the need for remediation. Remediation services (Title I, State Compensatory Education, volunteer services, child study

teams, etc.) are closely coordinated with the developmental program. The classroom teacher is the manager of the child's program. All structural elements of the district's organization and all curricular components of the instructional program are centered on the primacy of the classroom teacher's role (Brinson, 1980).

The aligned curriculum approach does not require one-to-one instruction; however, it does require individualized planning and record keeping. Students may still be taught in groups, but frequent assessment of progress is used to regroup students based on current needs. The most effective grouping has the leader working with small groups of three to seven or large groups of eight or more in some situations. Children working alone or with one or two other children and the teacher is negatively correlated with achievement (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974; Soar, 1973).

The behavior exhibited by teachers forms the group rules by which instruction and interaction occur in the classroom. Research concludes that effective teachers provide strong leadership by directing activities in a business-like way, as they manage the tasks and interactions of the classroom (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974; Soar 1973; Solomon and Kendall 1976). High achievement is more likely when teachers select the focus of the activities and apply appropriate principles of learning.

Achievement is lower in classes having a large amount of unsupervised seat work (Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Soar, 1973; and Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974). Moreover, effective teachers occupy the central role in the classroom and organize learning around questions which they pose. Inherent in management techniques of these teachers is the ability to maintain an intermediate position with respect to classroom control. Effective management in program improvement uses varied methods of control as opposed to a self-defeating management style based purely on criticism and rigidity (Soar, 1977). A well-managed classroom is one in which conditions for constructive rather than disruptive, deviate behavior prevail (Soar, 1973; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Bemis and Luft, 1970; Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976).

Another subject of study has been compensatory programs in basic skills. Schools have the option of serving the remedial needs of students in the regular classroom or in separate classes. In the regular classroom, the student to adult ratio is reduced, usually by adding a remedial teacher or aide for part of the day. However, some schools schedule those students, not needing remediation, for other activities during the school day, leaving the regular classroom teacher with fewer students for remediation.

The other option for remediation is the use of "pull-out." Students in need of remediation are sent to separate remedial classes for part of the day. Research has shown that "pull-out" as a method of remediation results in the negative labeling of many students. Teachers view these students as less capable and, consequently, lower their expectations for them. Lower teacher expectations, therefore, result in lower levels of student achievement. Another problem with "pull-out" is the frequent lack of coordination of teaching strategies, between the teacher and the special teacher, for the child's basic skills improvement plan. This results, then, in the student spending less time on tasks designed to correct basic skills deficiencies. Further, there is a consistent negative relationship between the time pupils spend in "pull-out" classes and reading and mathematics achievement (Glass and Smith, 1977).

Basic Skills Program Mathematics

Summary of Variables

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The planned and classroom implemented curriculum includes the following aligned and interrelated elements:

- . Expected outcomes - Sequenced skill arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels and are related to the standardized tests used in the district.
- . Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- . Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- . Record-keeping system The student record-keeping format is based on the concept of the continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. Within a district where there is high mobility of students, the system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school.

B. Compensatory Reading:

- . Supports the developmental program.
- . If remediation takes place through "pull-out", the negative effects are minimized.
- . If remediation takes place in the classroom, provision is made for adequate services for all students need remediation.

C. Instructional management includes:

- . classroom teacher-managed instruction
- . strong direct leadership by teachers
- . flexible grouping of students based on assessed learner needs
- . positive methods of control
- . in-class compensatory education
- . lack of classroom disruption

IV.A. DEVELOPMENTAL MATHEMATICS

Factor: IV.A.1. Teachers have and use clearly defined and sequenced outcomes of instruction such as a skills array or objectives.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Factors A.1-A.5 in this section are highly interrelated. It is essential that there be congruence between the objectives of learning, instruction, assessment and record keeping. Determining clearly what is to be learned is the first step in this sequence. The team member is asked to determine whether or not the school has formally defined expected outcomes and the degree to which they are used by the classroom teachers in directing instruction.

Suggested Procedures

Determine whether or not a skills array/objectives has been adopted for the mathematics program and secure copies for your review. Determine what level of involvement mathematics staff had in the selection or development of the skills array/objectives. Through interviews and classroom observations determine whether the skills array/objectives are used to guide instruction.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Mathematics coordinator
Teacher

Materials

Curriculum guides
Skills array/objectives
Lesson plans

268

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. There is a skills array in mathematics which actually guides instruction across all grade levels.
2. The classroom teachers and specialists support the skills array as what should be taught.

269

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. Classroom teachers and specialists base instruction on the same skills array. 4. If there is a high degree of student mobility between schools in the district, there is one skills array used to guide mathematics instruction in all schools.	

Conclusions concerning existence and use of skills array/objectives:

Recommendations concerning existence and use of skills array/objectives:

Factor: IV.A.2. Classroom instructional materials, teaching strategies and student activities in mathematics are directly referenced to the skills array in all classrooms and are sufficient in quantity and variety to respond to the learning needs of all children.

Consideration in reviewing this Factor

This factor asks first whether the instructional materials and activities have been directly coded or referenced to the skills array; second, whether the related materials and activities are used in actual classroom practice and, finally, the degree to which the materials and instructional activities give all children a chance to successfully learn essential mathematics skills.

Suggested Procedures

The focus of this section is to determine whether the material and instructional activities are matched to the learning outcomes as defined and assessed. Most teachers rely heavily on the textbook series and supplement it with other activities and material. However, many schools also have a curriculum guide which describes the approved program. The team member needs to look at what is supposed to be the "official" curriculum and what is actually the "in use" curriculum, and the degree to which it reflects the skills array/objectives.

The team member should determine if the skills array/objectives are used as a criteria for selecting new textbooks or materials.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Mathematics coordinators

Material

Curriculum guides
Textbooks
Supplemental materials

Indicators

Comments/Findings

271^{1.} Basic text materials have been analyzed and correlated to the skills array in a manner which facilitates their use by teachers and identifies mismatches or omissions in skill development.

272

Indicators

Comments/Findings

2. There are adequate supplementary materials to support instruction in specific skills, particularly those skills identified as in need of improvement.
3. The materials are geared to the ability levels of the students, appropriate for the interests and age levels of the students and responsive to special learning needs (such as students with limited English proficiency).
4. Mathematics skills are incorporated in other subject areas.
5. The need of students of limited English proficiency or with another native language has been considered in selecting textbooks for all courses.
6. Districts with a high degree of student mobility between schools coordinate the curriculum across all schools.
7. The school curriculum is coordinated with sending and receiving schools.

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

- | | |
|--|--|
| 8. The remedial services are part of the overall mathematics curriculum of the school. | |
|--|--|

Conclusions concerning instructional materials and procedures:

Recommendations concerning instructional materials and procedures:

274

Factor: IV.A.3. Classroom instructional materials, teaching strategies and student activities in early childhood programs are consistent with the developmental level of the pupils.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

There is often conflict between pressure to produce formal instructional gains at an early age and the readiness of young children. Appropriate principles of learning must be applied to the younger students who are bound by developmental factors sometimes overlooked in planning instructional strategies and activities. Unsound practices are detrimental to the attainment of desired skills or have negative side effects.

Suggested Procedures

Determine who in authority has knowledge of and interest in the needs of the younger student and discuss the early childhood program with that person. Visit the pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and primary grade classrooms to assess the appropriateness of the activities.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Teachers
Nurse
Parents

Materials

Lessons plans
Curriculum guides
SCE/Title I/Follow Through application

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Pre-school, kindergarten and first grade students are screened for potential learning difficulties in the following areas:

- visual acuity and perception
- auditory acuity and discrimination
- visual and auditory memory
- speech and language development
- psychomotor abilities

276

275

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. There is follow-up on identified areas of weakness.3. The daily schedule or classroom structure makes provision for alternate active and quiet activities.4. Students are provided with a variety of hands-on experiences and activities to facilitate the development of communication, quantitative reasoning and problem-solving skills.5. Students are provided options in the selection of activities and materials to develop decision-making skills and to allow for individual interests and different learning styles.6. Students are provided opportunities to communicate through a variety of media and their products are prominently displayed. | |
|--|--|

Conclusions concerning early childhood programs:

277

Recommendations concerning early childhood programs:

278

Factor: IV.A.4. Assessment procedures used in the school for assessing specific achievements and needs of students in mathematics are based on the skills array and the actual material covered in the classrooms.

Considerations in Reviewing This Factor

The team member is asked to confirm that the assessment instrument and procedures are based on the skills array and classroom instruction. This requires looking at the total student evaluation design including such things as teacher-made tests, district/school standardized testing, MBS test usage and any other sources used by teachers to measure pupils' progress.

Suggested Procedures

Make a determination, through interviews with central and school staff assigned to the MBS test administration and/or locally selected test administration, as to what efforts were made to analyze the tests and other indicators of pupil progress to determine their validity as measures of the instructional program. Find out if an individual or group has been assigned responsibility for analyzing and communicating the findings regarding the alignment of instruction and assessment. Where possible, take a random sample of objectives and ask staff to demonstrate how they assess these items.

Sources of Information

People

Central staff
Principals
Teachers

Materials

MBS test printouts
Report of MBS test results to
board of education
Agenda for staff meeting on MBS tests results
Report of locally selected test results

60 279

Indicators

Comments/Findings

280

1. Staff formally matched pupil progress assessment procedures to the skills array/objectives including:
 - a. MBS test items
 - b. the school standardized testing program items

Indicators

Comments/Findings

- c. teacher-made tests
 - d. means of assessment used by staff other than tests to measure pupil progress on the skills array.
2. The MBS test has been analyzed to determine which skills on the district's skills array have been mastered and which need additional emphasis.
 3. The results of the MBS tests, the district's standardized tests and other tests have been analyzed to determine skill mastery level for all students, including those of limited English proficiency.
 4. Teachers use the results of student assessment to plan instruction.
 5. Standardized assessment instruments have been analyzed to determine if the material covered on the tests is being taught at the appropriate time in the classrooms.
 6. Reports of the results of the MBS test and the school's standardized testing program reflecting individual and group data are distributed to all staff for instructional and program planning purposes.
 7. Classroom assessment results are used to guide instruction.
 8. Students are grouped for instruction based on current identified needs.
 9. Parents and students know the objectives of the program and the individual student's mastery level.

Conclusions concerning the assessment procedures:

Recommendations concerning the assessment procedures:

282

Factor: IV.A.5. There is a classroom record keeping and reporting system which tracks the progress of of students based on the defined learning outcomes in mathematics across all grade levels and allows for frequent feedback to the students, parents and teacher on the progress of students at all grade levels.

Considerations in Reviewing This Factor

The reviewer is asked to determine whether:

- a. the record keeping system reflects the skills array/objectives
- b. the teachers use the recorded information for instructional and program management purposes, and
- c. the reporting system ensures that parents and students know the objectives of the mathematics program and the student's progress toward achieving them.

Suggested Procedures

Request samples of the record keeping and reporting materials used in the district and school. Determine if there is a correlation between the school skills array, the skills assessed, skills recorded and reported and textbook used for instruction. There should be consistency within and across grade levels. Skills need to be identified in some way as having been introduced, mastered and reinforced.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Supervisor(s)
Principal
Resource staff
Teachers

Materials

Student record cards
Individual teacher records
Skills arrays
Curriculum guides

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. The school's skills array is used as the basis of a standardized record keeping system which tracks the progress of students in the classroom and across grade levels. 2. When the district has high student mobility between schools, there is a standard record keeping system district-wide which allows for tracking of student progress between schools.	

Conclusions concerning student record keeping:

Recommendations concerning student record keeping:

285

IV.B. COMPENSATORY MATHEMATICS

Factor: IV.B.1. The developmental mathematics program in the classroom is viewed as the major component of the mathematics program and the compensatory instruction supports the basic program.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Compensatory instruction, to be meaningful, needs to be an extension of the developmental program. The classroom teacher needs to be assigned the primary role in the management of the student's program. The team member is asked to determine the relationship between the developmental and the compensatory programs. Selection of students for supplemental services must be based on need and the services must be designed to support the student's on-going developmental program. Teachers in developmental and compensatory programs should jointly plan and monitor each student's progress.

Suggested Procedures

The major focus of the team member should be to determine if the supplemental compensatory services are a planned and implemented extension of the developmental program. Examine the applications for Title I and State Compensatory Education funds to determine the relationship between both programs. Try to find evidence that regular classroom teachers and compensatory mathematics teachers jointly plan student instruction to insure that the individual needs of the student are addressed and instruction is coordinated to provide a continuous learning experience for each student. Also determine the degree to which teachers share information about a student's progress as a basis for reviewing and planning that child's program through the year.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Program administrators
Supervisory staff
Principal
Teachers, regular and supplemental

Materials

Compensatory Education/Title I applications
ASSA report and back-up data
Assessment documents

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. The classroom teachers are assigned primary responsibility for the mathematics program of their students.
2. The classroom teacher coordinates the instruction and assists in identifying students requiring services.
3. The same skills array is used in planning compensatory instruction as in the developmental program.
4. The materials used for compensatory instruction are coordinated with the materials used in the developmental program.
5. The assessment procedures used for compensatory services are coordinated with those used in the developmental program.
6. The compensatory staff uses the same record keeping system as is used in the developmental program.
7. Classroom teachers and compensatory staff meet regularly to discuss coordination of programs and individual student progress.
8. Students of limited English proficiency in need of compensatory education are served in programs where their individual needs are addressed.
9. All students needing supplemental compensatory instruction are receiving such instruction.
10. Most remediation in mathematics takes place within the classroom. The adult to student ratio:
 - a. allows for remediation of specific learning deficiencies

288

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

- b. allows for a significant increase in individual student time-on-task.
11. Classroom aides are used to free the teacher to devote more time to students with deficiencies.
12. Classroom aides are adequately supervised by the teacher.

Conclusions concerning compensatory instruction as supportive of the developmental program:

Recommendations concerning compensatory instruction as supportive of the developmental program:

Factor: IV.B.2. If remediation takes place through "pull-out" in mathematics, the negative effects of "pull-out," such as negative student labeling, reduced time-on-task and disruption of the regular program are avoided.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Removing students from the regular classroom environment to provide compensatory instruction has been shown to have negative effects on learning such as labeling, fragmented instruction, and reduced time-on-task. The reviewer is asked to determine what efforts have been made to avoid these negative effects. The team member is also asked to determine the degree to which negative effects have actually accrued.

Suggested Procedures

Interview students and staff and, when possible, parents to determine whether they view the program as having a positive or negative effect on the student and his/her learning. Review the organizational structure and scheduling of "pull-out" classes to determine whether significant amounts of instructional time are lost to student movement or disruption of regular classroom instruction. Ask students and staff to describe a typical day; where possible, actually track a student's involvement in the "pull-out" program vis-a-vis the regular classroom mathematics instruction.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Parents
Students

Materials

Lesson plans
Student/class schedules

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. The negative labeling of students requiring remediation is avoided by other students, teachers and administrators.
2. The compensatory "pull-out" program actually results in increased time in mathematics instruction.

290

291

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. The classroom teacher continues to have the primary responsibility for student instruction in mathematics. 4. Classroom teachers are included in planning the form of remedial service to be provided for their students. 5. The classroom teachers support the "pull-out" program in preference to other forms of assistance for their students. 6. Student participation in the "pull-out" program does not prevent them from participating in other important instructional programs. 7. Student participation in the "pull-out" program, does not prevent them from participating in activities which motivate students (i.e. recess, lunch, art, physical education).	

Conclusions concerning the use of a "pull-out" program, if applicable:

Factor: IV.B.3. If remediation takes place in the classroom, the classroom teacher identifies students requiring services and coordinates the instruction.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

The team member reviewing this factor needs to determine whether the classroom teacher is:

- a. actually involved in identifying students who need compensatory instruction
- b. formally recognized as the manager of compensatory instruction in his/her classroom

The team member is also asked to confirm that the classroom teacher carries out his/her role by ensuring that compensatory instruction in the classroom is different from, but supportive of the regular instructional program and that the instruction responds to the specific learning deficiencies of the individual student.

Suggested Procedures

Review written information such as the job description and categorical remedial plans (e.g., Title I and Compensatory Education) to determine who is assigned responsibility for coordinating the program in the classroom and for identifying students who should be serviced by the program. Discuss with the principal, mathematics coordinator and teachers their perceptions of whether classroom teachers have this responsibility.

Observe classroom activities, review lesson plans and talk with teachers and aides to determine what is taught and how the compensatory instruction is supplemental to and coordinated with the regular classroom instruction of participating students.

The concept of teacher coordination of the program also implies that teachers play an active role in ensuring a smooth transition for students from one grade to another based on accurate and detailed record keeping. Also that teachers should have a role in planning the overall structure and operational plan of the compensatory program.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Classroom and remedial teachers
Principal
Classroom aides
Mathematics Coordinator
Students

Materials

Job descriptions
Lesson plans
Recordkeeping
Title I and compensatory Education plans

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. The classroom teacher is assigned responsibility for coordinating the programs in his/her classroom.
2. The classroom teacher is actively involved in the identification of students who need compensatory services.
3. During the compensatory instruction the adult to student ratio:
 - a. allows for remediation of specific learning deficiencies
 - b. allows for a significant increase in individual student time-on-task.
4. Aides/volunteers are used in the classroom to free the teacher to devote more time to students with deficiencies.
5. Classroom aides/volunteers are adequately supervised by the teacher.
6. Each student has an individual record which describes his/her progress. When a student changes grades or schools, this record forms the basis for planning a continuation of the student's program.
7. The classroom teacher actively participates in school/district decisions about what will be taught, how the program will operate, and how the program may be improved.

295

Conclusions concerning the classroom teacher's role in coordinating in-classroom compensatory instruction:

Recommendations concerning the classroom teacher's role in coordinating in-classroom compensatory instruction:

IV.C. MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL AND COMPENSATORY MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTION

Factor: IV.C.1. There is a written plan which guides basic skills instruction.

Considerations for Reviewing This Factor

The district plan for basic skills instruction should be a written plan which includes, but is not necessarily limited to: a) a definition of a developmental program, b) a definition of compensatory services, c) a projection of staff development activities for the year based on identified needs, d) program improvement objectives and, e) clearly defined lines of responsibility. The team member is asked to determine the plan's existence and the degree to which it has been implemented.

Suggested Procedures

Identify and secure a copy of the written plan for mathematics instruction and review it to determine the degree to which it provides a clear definition of a coordinated program, roles and responsibilities of administrative, supervisory and instructional staff, and the identification of program and staff improvement activities. Observe classrooms and review lesson plans, inservice agenda, and basic skills improvement activities to determine the degree to which the plan is being implemented. This information can be collected at the same time information is collected for IV A, B.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Mathematics coordinators
Principals
Students

Materials

Basic skills plan
Lesson plans
Inservice agenda
Basic skills committee agenda
Minutes from staff meetings such as T & E,
department or grade level meetings

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. There is a written basic skills plan.
2. The plan is being implemented by the staff.
3. The plan has a management design which draws together all personnel, materials and services (regardless of funding sources) in a uniform basic skills effort across all grade levels.
4. The management of the basic skills instruction focuses on the developmental program.
5. The principal is assigned the overall responsibility for the basic skills instruction in the school.
6. The classroom teacher is given the management responsibility for the student's basic skills program.
7. The structured elements of the district's organization and all curricular components of the instructional program center on the primacy of the classroom teacher's role.
8. There are clear lines of responsibility concerning basic skills instruction in the school and in the district.
9. Improvement objectives for mathematics instruction have been established and communicated to staff, students and parents and focus on such improvements as:
 - a. reducing the number of students needing compensatory services
 - b. ameliorating identified program weaknesses

Indicators

Comments/Findings

- c. emphasizing/reinforcing the specific skills with which many students have difficulty.
- d. including the interim objectives resulting from MBS testing and T&E basic skills planning.
- 10. Staff development activities are targeted at identified needs and are perceived by staff as responsive to those needs.

Conclusions concerning the basic skills plan:

Recommendations concerning the basic skills plan:

301

Factor: IV.C.2. There are individual instructional plans for each student who achieves below the state standard in mathematics at the sixth grade level or above.

Consideration for Reviewing this Factor

The team member is asked to a) confirm the existence of individual instructional plans for students requiring remediation and, b) determine whether the plan provides instructional direction for the developmental program and compensatory services.

Suggested Procedures

Ask to see the package of student plans in a sample of classes having remedial students. Review a random sample of student plans and folders to determine what is included. Talk to teachers to determine who has responsibility for developing student plans and carrying them out. Also try to determine the degree to which student plans are implemented as needed, and the degree to which student plans are adjusted based on a continuing assessment of student needs.

Sources of Information

People

Mathematics coordinator
Classroom teachers
Supplemental teachers
Students

Materials

Student folders used for recording
student needs, activities and reporting
progress of lesson plans

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. A staff member has been assigned responsibility for developing an instructional plan for each student who failed to meet the state standard in mathematics at the sixth grade level and above.	
2. A written plan for each eligible student exists.	
3. Student plans are based on formal diagnostic data.	

303

Indicators	Comments/Findings
4. Student plans include: a. specific areas of need/desired outcomes b. activities targeted at meeting those needs c. a system for evaluating student progress d. a system for reporting progress to students, parents and staff. 5. A staff member has been assigned responsibility for the overall instructional mathematics program for each student who failed to meet the state standard in mathematics at the sixth grade level or above.	

Conclusions concerning individual plans for students needing remediation:

Recommendations concerning individual plans for students needing remediation:

304

Factor: IV.C.3. Teachers provide strong leadership in the classroom.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Strong leadership is defined in this factor as the teacher's ability to:

- a. effectively manage classroom organization and instruction
- b. establish a positive and business-like environment
- c. determine the foci of instructional activities and apply appropriate principles of learning.

Reviewers are asked to identify evidence of these characteristics in the classroom. (Note: The team member is asked to ensure that every teacher involved in basic skills instruction is visited and/or interviewed during the team's stay in the school. To observe all basic skills teachers, the team member may want to ask other team members to assist in making observations.

Suggested Procedures

Classroom observations and interviews form the basis of information on this factor. It is important that the team members share their perceptions and establish inter-observer consistency before making generalized statements.

Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Principal
Mathematics supervisor

Materials

Job description
Basic skills
supplemental instruction plans

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Teachers effectively manage tasks and interactions in the classroom.
2. Teachers group students for instruction based on clearly identified criteria (i.e., skill attainment, interests, learning style).

/

306

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. Teachers adequately supervise seat work. 4. Teachers use positive reinforcement to motivate students. 5. The climate in the classroom is positive and supportive of the educational process. 6. Teachers determine what is to be taught, the most appropriate way instruction should be carried out for each child and when student instructional plans should be modified.	

Conclusions concerning teacher leadership in the classroom:

Recommendations concerning teacher leadership in the classroom:

307

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME
(PART V OF VI)

V. Instructional Time

Most educators would agree that children who spend more time in learning-related activities tend to learn more. However, time is often not treated as a resource that can be manipulated to improve student learning, as educators tend to think of time as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for learning. That is, they generally feel that it is not only the quantity but also the quality of time spent in a learning situation that determines a student's progress.

Recent research has begun to focus attention on both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the time concept. So, the literature in this area is beginning to offer guidance to schools not only about the importance of how much time is made available for student learning, but also about more effective ways to use time (LeCompte, 1979). The pervasive influence of time on student achievement is developed in a model of "Individual Instructional Exposure and Achievement" (Wiley and Harnischfeger, 1974). For example, the overall importance of time-to-learn has been repeatedly emphasized by Bloom (1980) and Carroll (1963). Also, a number of studies have shown significant correlations between student learning and the following variables: a longer school day (Bond and Dykstra, 1967), number of days of student and teacher absence (Rosenshine, 1971), average number of hours of schooling (Wiley and Harnischfeger, 1974), amount of time spent on academic activities (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974), and student engaged time (Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study, 1978). Moreover, the importance of active engagement on the part of both teachers and students in the instructional process is often emphasized.

The Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study or BTES study (Phase III, 1978) developed a model of instructional processes which focused on reading and mathematics instruction at the elementary school level. This classroom model acknowledges the common sense view that, for a given student, certain instructional processes lead to student classroom learning which is then reflected in achievement test scores. An analysis of the research suggests that improved student learning results from increasing the amount of time in a school day, or from assigning more time to instruction in a particular subject area. However, the most important consideration might be to take steps to ensure that teachers spend more time on instruction-related activities. Teacher time-on-task may be increased by achieving better classroom control, or improved organization of instruction or by more effective use of instruction materials. In this sense, time may be a concept that cuts across all of the variables to be considered in the school effectiveness research.

Instructional Time

Summary of Variables

- A. Time in Basic Skills Instruction - The school allocates sufficient instructional time to the teaching of reading and math and, when necessary, increases this time to provide for additional instruction. Student and teacher attendance provides for maximum basic skills instruction.
- B. Classroom Instructional Time - Teachers use the time allocated to the teaching of reading and math by applying effective strategies for organizing and managing the learning environment.
- C. Student Engaged Time - In reading and math instruction, students spend a high proportion of their time engaged in academic work.

Factor: V.A.1. Students have a high record of attendance.

Considerations for Reviewing this Factor

Student absenteeism can significantly reduce the students' opportunity to learn. It is difficult to determine exactly when absenteeism can be classified as a problem for a school; however, the following figures are provided as a guide for reviewers:

Data Collection Year	National Average Daily Attendance	New Jersey Average Daily Attendance
1977-78	92.0%	90.6%

(Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics of State School Systems)

Suggested Procedures

Review with the principal or attendance officer the absentee rate for the past two or three years. Discuss absenteeism with teachers to determine if they think absenteeism is a problem. If there appears to be a problem, the reviewer may want to discuss reasons for low attendance with parents and students. Review current procedures for dealing with absenteeism.

Sources of Information

People

Principal
Attendance officers
Teachers
Parents
Students

Materials

Attendance records
Attendance policies and procedures

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

1. The average daily attendance of students in the school is at or above 90%.
2. Staff communicates to students the importance of good attendance.
3. Students perceive administration and teachers as encouraging and requiring good student attendance records.
4. If student attendance is a problem, staff has analyzed the cause(s) of that problem and have developed a plan to improve attendance.
5. The students' attendance in basic skills classes is at or above 90% daily.

Conclusions concerning attendance:

315

Recommendations concerning attendance:

Factor: V.A.2. Teachers have a high record of attendance.

Considerations for Reviewing this Factor

Teacher absenteeism reduces the students' opportunity to learn. If qualified substitutes are available and teachers provide adequate lesson plans, the negative effects of the teacher's absence can be reduced. A high level of teacher absenteeism is frequently associated with dissatisfaction with the school environment. Although it is difficult to define "high level of absenteeism" the State Department of Education has been encouraging schools with an average teacher attendance rate below 96% to consider procedures for improving attendance.

Suggested Procedures

Review attendance and substitute policies and procedures with the superintendent and the principal. If teacher attendance appears to be a factor in student achievement discuss attendance with teachers and administrators.

Sources of Information

People

Superintendent
Principal
Teachers
Substitutes

Materials

Attendance records
Attendance policies and procedures
Salary guides for substitutes
Procedures for substitutes

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Teacher attendance is at an acceptably high level.
2. Where staff absenteeism is a problem, there is a plan to improve attendance.
3. Qualified substitutes provide instruction when teachers are absent.
4. Teachers provide adequate guidance/lesson plans for substitutes.

Indicators	Comments/Findings
5. The school provides training and information to guide new substitutes. 6. When substitutes are not available and classes have to be combined, basic skills instruction is not interrupted. 7. Teacher release time (i.e., inservice, ad hoc assignments, committee work, etc.) does not significantly interfere with basic skills instructional time.	

Conclusions concerning the attendance of staff and students as it relates to basic skills instruction:

Recommendations concerning the attendance of staff and students as it relates to basic skills instruction:

318

319

V.B. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Factor: V.B. Adequate time is devoted to basic skills instruction to allow for a comprehensive developmental program and to remediate student deficiencies.

Considerations for Reviewing this Factor

The team member is asked to determine the adequacy of time devoted to basic skills instruction as well as the degree to which the class size and classroom organization provide each student with the kind of instructional time which meets his/her learning needs.

Suggested Procedures

Classroom observations and a review of instructional schedules for both the developmental and compensatory programs (including "pull-out" instruction) represent prime sources of information. It may also be helpful to determine through staff and student interviews if they believe scheduled basic skills instructional time is adequate.

Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Students
Basic skills supervisory staff

Materials

Class schedules
Lesson plans

Indicators

1. Adequate time is provided for the developmental reading program.
2. Adequate time is provided for remediation of deficiencies in reading for all students needing assistance.
3. Adequate time is provided for the developmental mathematics program.

Comments/Findings

321

Indicators	Comments/Findings
4. Adequate time is provided for remediation of deficiencies in mathematics for all students needing assistance. 5. Teacher-instructional time is increased through the use of aides or volunteers for non-instructional tasks. 6. The adult to student ratio in basic skills classes allows for small group instruction. 7. The adult to student ratio allows for adequate individual instructional management (i.e., up-to-date student records of skills achievement). 8. Teachers provide additional time in basic skills instruction for students who need it. 9. If the home environment of most students is not conducive to completing homework assignments, time is provided in school to complete assignments.	

Conclusions concerning classroom instructional time:

322

Recommendations concerning classroom instructional time:

323

127

V.C. STUDENT ENGAGED TIME

Factor: V.C.1. Students are engaged in constructive classroom activities for most of the time which is scheduled for basic skills classroom instruction.

Considerations for Reviewing this Factor

This factor asks the team member to determine the degree to which the student is involved in learning activities. The team member should be concerned with the individual student's time-on-task, the total number of students in the classroom, the productivity involved in the instructional process and the time spent focusing on the objective of the lesson.

Suggested Procedures

This factor focuses on what is actually happening -- not on what is planned. While observing classroom instruction it may be helpful to audit time on task by exception (i.e., note amounts of time and numbers of students not engaged in the learning activities assigned to them). Note: Time spent in organizing the class or giving instructions is not considered instructional time. Asking students how much time they spend on math/reading each day may be used to supplement classroom observations.

Suggested Resources

People

Teachers
Students

Materials

Student work

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. In general, at least 75% of the students are alert and participating in:
 - a. reading instruction
 - b. mathematics instruction

325

Indicators

Comments/Findings

2. Student achievement in basic skills is not negatively influenced by any of the following:
 - a. drug/alcohol abuse
 - b. violence in the school
 - c. absenteeism
 - d. poor nutrition
 - e. class cutting
 - f. suspension
 - g. unidentified handicaps
 - h. student mobility
3. If learning is negatively effected by any of the above, the school has developed and implemented a plan to reduce the problem.
4. Teacher requests for child study team reviews are honored and such reviews are conducted according to state guidelines.
5. The needs of limited English proficient students are taken into account when class homework activities are planned and assigned.
6. Students are sufficiently proficient in English to benefit from lessons presented in English.

Conclusions concerning constructive involvement in class activities:

Recommendations concerning constructive involvement in class activities:

327

Factor: V.C.2. Disruption of classroom instruction in basic skills is minimal.

Consideration for Reviewing this Factor

Disruption of classroom instructional time falls into two major categories: 1) interruptions imposed from people/activities outside the classroom and 2) interruption of instruction resulting from discipline/behavior problems, and/or inefficient classroom organization.

Suggested Procedures

When reviewing this factor, try to identify specific causes of interruption which reduce scheduled instructional time. Some interruptions are planned, such as assemblies, announcements, etc. Review weekly school schedules, activity bulletin boards, etc. to determine how much time is pre-empted by other activities. Interview staff and students to determine what kind and what amount of scheduled instructional time is lost and to determine whether they believe this has a detrimental effect on the instructional process. When observing classes to collect program information, it may be helpful to tally or note specific disruptions to profile the use of class time.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teaching staff (regular classroom and supplemental)
Principal/vice principal
Students

Materials

Assembly and inservice schedules
Weekly calendars
Lesson plan books
Special activity bulletins and/or weekly memo to staff
Committee and ad hoc staff assignments which occur during the school day

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. In general, no more than five minutes of basic skills instructional time in a class is lost as a result of announcements, hall noise, etc. per period.
2. In general, no more than five minutes of basic skills instructional time in class is lost due to student disruption, discipline and/or classroom organizational activities per period.

329

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. If the school has a "pull-out" program in basic skills for remediation, it does not interfere with or supplant the developmental program in: a. reading b. mathematics 4. Teachers and students believe there are very few interruptions in basic skills instruction. 5. When disruptions in basic skills instruction occur, the staff finds ways to make up that time.	

Conclusions regarding teachers' use of time in organizing and managing reading and mathematics instruction:

Recommendations regarding teachers' use of time in organizing and managing reading and mathematics instruction:

330

331

PARENT/COMMUNITY RELATIONS
(PART VI OF VI)

332

VI. Parent and Community Relations

"The family is the central, most important long lasting learning institution a child experiences" (Gordon, 1979). Research justifies this statement by indicating that parental involvement in the educational process can greatly enhance a child's prospects for academic success (Bronfenbrenner, 1978; Bloom, 1980; Clark, Lotto and McCarthy, 1980). According to Gordon (1979), parents can interact with the educational system as (1) teachers of their own children, (2) adult learners of new skills, (3) volunteers in the classroom, (4) paid para-professionals, and (5) decision-makers and policy advisors.

When the parent acts as tutor in the home, research indicates that benefits accrue to all the children in the home as well as to the parent-tutor (Olmsted, 1976; Gordon, 1979). Home tutoring positively affects a child's language development, his/her general aptitude for learning and his/her motivation to learn in school (Bloom, 1980; Bronfenbrenner, 1978). Further, when parents are involved as teachers of their own children a number of possible benefits occur, including increased parent/child transaction, increased home/school understanding, and conceivable cost benefits to the overall institutional effort (Harrison & Wilkenson, 1978; Gordon, 1979; Rich Van Dien and Mattox, 1979).

Research indicates that when the parent works as a para-professional or classroom volunteer they gain a sense of self-sufficiency and self-confidence. These roles have included professional training and often allowed opportunities for advancement. Para-professional and volunteer work also impact on the system, affecting the school in terms of manpower, public relations, policy alignment and general family services (medical and such) (True, 1979; Gordon, 1979).

For the role of the parent as a decision-maker to function optimally, schools and administrators must be cognizant of the social, political, economic and educational factors concerning the parent body (True, 1979). Parents as decision-makers can function on three levels: (1) the individual level (choice of school, teachers, etc.), (2) school level (e.g., PTA involvement), and (3) community level (as board member, citizen advisory or parent advocate), (Davies, Burges, Hirsch, Hirsch, Hugenin, Upton, and Zerchkov, 1979; True, 1979). When parents feel their input and involvement has a meaning, they are more likely to participate in the system.

All programs involving parents and the community ought to be part of a larger school-wide plan. The school should identify parent/community goals, as well as identify strategies for enlisting parents and mobilizing the resources of the home. In successful parent participation programs, roles are clearly identified and the school has devised methods of evaluation (Davies, et al. 1979; Hugenin, 1979).

Because parent and community involvement essentially can impact heavily on the total educational scheme, it is incumbent on schools to encourage and to facilitate this interaction. Rich & et al. 1979 and Rutter, 1979 have identified some means by which principals and teachers can involve parents. They can:

Raise consciousness about the home and community as the key to student achievement and publicize and support ideas, materials and strategies that promote this belief.

- . Encourage student, parent, and teacher projects in the community.
- . Recognize that parents are a significant force in their child's education. Search for ways to involve parents as educational partners.
- . Show parents in a variety of ways that you care for them and their children. Inform parents regularly of what is happening in school on a regular basis. Offer a variety of school-parent programs and materials designed to build the home/school/community educational partnership.
- . Encourage parents to visit the school, confer with school staff regularly and to use the school as a source for help and referral to community agencies.
- . Teach parents how they can help their children at home. Provide home learning tips on how to supplement the work of the school.
- . Utilize effectively the contribution of parents' skills, insights, talents and concerns to the educational process.
- . Use the resources of the home for materials, ideas and as resources for different subject areas.
- . Adapt successful program practices from the preschool and elementary levels to the needs of older students and their families.
- . Set up a functional design for operating a parent advisory council at the school. Combine specific tasks and advisory functions as a focus for positive parental efforts.

Essentially, the efforts of teachers and administrators should be directed at reducing the divergency between parents and educators. When the home and the school have congruent learning emphases, the child has little difficulty in his later school learning (Bloom, 1980), and the child's attitudes and achievement level are likely to be enhanced.

Citizens and educators are recognizing that improvement in the schools and community support for education occurs only when schools and communities are open to each other: when the educational consumer (student, parent and community member) has a strong, honest part in setting policy and making decisions (National Institute of Education, 1978; Office of Education, 1979; Davies, 1976).

335

Above all, parents want safe schools. The most recent Gallup Polls on public attitudes toward education ranked discipline as the number one concern of parents. The use of alcohol and drug has continued, for the past decade, to assume a priority in the public's concern about public schools. Crime and vandalism, in the latest survey, received sufficient mentions to place it among the top 10 major problems (Elam, 1978).

336

Research indicates that where violence levels are high, teaching and learning are negatively affected by a school climate that is dominated by fear (National Institute of Education, 1978).

The Safe School Study Report cited community-school relations as a factor in the incidence of school crime and misbehavior. Schools having good relationships with the surrounding communities tend to have less of a problem. The more support a school receives from parents, community agencies, policy, the board of education and other sources, the safer the school will be (National Institute of Education, 1978).

Progress in education is more likely to occur within the context of collaborative partnership involving the home, school, community and municipality (National Institute of Education, 1978; U.S. Office of Education, 1979).

Parent and Community Relations

Summary of Variables

- A. Parent and Community Relations and the Basic Skills Program - The school communicates with parents and community members about the basic skills program (e.g., student expectations, content of instruction, evaluation, reporting system) and also encourages parents to communicate with the school and become involved with the instructional program.
- B. Parent and Community Relations and the Non-Instructional Processes - The administration and teachers communicate with the parents and community regarding school policies and practices, and they encourage active participation of parents for the purpose of providing a safe, pleasant and effective learning environment.

VI.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Factor: VI.A. The school communicates with parents and community members about the basic skills program (e.g., student expectations, content of instruction, evaluation, reporting system) and encourages parents to communicate with the school and become involved in their children's basic skills program.

Considerations in Reviewing This Factor

Given the family as a major learning force in a child's experience, this factor focuses the team member's attention on the degree to which parents know about and participate in the school's basic skills program, so that a "partnership" between the school and the home can serve as a motivating, supportive and reinforcing system to the child's basic skills education. The team member needs to find out if the administration and staff believe a partnership with parents and community is important and, if so, what specific efforts are made by the school to develop and sustain that partnership.

Suggested Procedures

Data collection related to this factor is basically a two step process: First, to determine what the school and its staff says and perceives about what they do to encourage the parent/community partnership, and second, to find out the degree to which representatives of the parents and community confirm those efforts, indicate a positive relationship with the school, and support the basic skills program.

The reviewer is strongly urged to define the parent and community population, identify the major ethnic and racial groups and identify the official and unofficial spokespersons of the community prior to the actual visit so that the team member can plan his/her activities well in advance of the visit to the school. It may take the school some time to arrange for specific interviews. A fairly large segment of time should be set aside to talk with parents and community members in "their territory" (i.e., community center, local store, housing project, local chapter). It is important that a cross section of parents and community members be interviewed.

Sources of Information

People

Board members
Community organization leaders
Informal community leaders
Sample of parents (including non-
English speaking, if this a major group)
PTA members
Church leaders
School aides/volunteers
Principal
Teachers
Social workers

Materials

Policies
Written procedures for communicating with parents
Sample communications with parents (e.g., report
cards, newsletters, etc.)
Records of parent conferences

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. The school has clear procedures for parent involvement which are known to staff, parents and students.
2. The school has a clear set of objectives for parent participation.
3. Classroom teachers communicate directly with parents concerning the basic skills program and the role parents can play in supporting the program.
4. Parents are given information and materials to assist them in working with students at home on basic skills.

343

344

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

5. Parents indicate they work with their children at home in basic skills improvement activities.
6. Parent conferences are held regularly concerning individual student achievement in basic skills and the majority of parents attend (at least 75%).
7. The staff has procedures to communicate with parents who do not attend conferences.
8. Communication (both verbal and written) with parents is in the language of the parents.
9. Parents are supportive of the basic skills program and believe that it is meeting the needs of their children.
10. Parents feel comfortable in initiating contact with the school and individual staff members.
11. Parents volunteer their services or serve as aides in the school.
12. The district and/or school prepares written materials to communicate with the general population of the community regarding instructional programs, activities, successes and needs (i.e., newspaper articles, newsletters)
13. The community is supportive of the basic skills program and believes that it is meeting the needs of the children.

Conclusions concerning the role of parents and community members in supporting the basic skills program.

Recommendations concerning the role of parents and community members in supporting the basic skills program:

346

347

VI.B. PARENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND THE NON-INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESSES

Factor: VI.B. Parents and other community members are actively supportive of the school program, policies and procedures.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

"Actively supportive" is defined here as parents and community members:

- a. responding positively when asked whether the school is doing a good job with its children
- b. participating (in large numbers) in school activities and parent conferences related to basic skills instruction
- c. being strongly involved in the PTA
- d. volunteering services, talents and skills to support the school
- e. indicating the school is a safe environment, fair in its treatment of all students and correct in the expectation it has for student behavior and discipline
- f. supporting budget items related to the instructional program of their children
- g. participating in goal setting and school problem solving activities with staff

Suggested Procedures

Similar to the previous factor, the team member needs to determine what kind of support the school has from parents and the community through interviews with administration, supervisory staff, teachers, and aides/volunteers. Next, the team member will need to test the school staff's perceptions by interviewing a representative sample of parents and community members. The same schedule of interviews can serve both factors in this section.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Staff, including teachers, administrators
secretaries, custodians (especially
those who live in the community)
Board members
Formal and informal community leaders
Parents of public and non-public school
children

Materials

Agenda and minutes of specific meetings
Newspaper articles
Budget votes

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Parents, including those who are non-English speaking, understand the school's expectations regarding the behavior of children toward their classmates and faculty in and out of the classroom and the school.
2. Parents feel comfortable in contacting the school for information or problems concerning their children and know how to make the appropriate contact.
3. Parents say the school provides a safe environment for their children.
4. Parents agree with the behavioral and academic standards set by the school (i.e., policy on homework, discipline, advancement to higher grades, tests, etc).
5. The school staff contacts parents in a timely manner when a problem arises concerning their children.

350

351

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

6. Students attending the school represent all abilities and economic levels of the community it serves.
7. The community served by the school has supported the district budget in recent years.
8. Parents and other community members have been active in the T & E process.
9. The school involves parents and the community in finding solutions for such problems as:
 - a. discipline
 - b. violence
 - c. vandalism
 - d. drugs
 - e. absenteeism
 - f. class cutting
 - g. nutrition
 - h. family mobility
10. There is substantial parent participation in school functions (e.g., PTA meetings, Title I councils, classroom activities).

Conclusions concerning parent and community member support for the school:

Recommendations concerning parent and community member support for the school:



COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM REVIEW

SUMMER, 1980

SECONDARY SCHOOL GUIDELINES

COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SKILLS

PROGRAM REVIEW

SECONDARY SCHOOL GUIDELINES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	1
Introduction	1
Bibliography	4
I. District Policies and School Management Practices.	13
A. Basic Skills Policies.	16
B. Discipline Policies.	22
C. Staff Development Policies	27
D. Decision-Making Policies	32
II. Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations.	36
A. Teacher Knowledge of Instructional Content	39
B. Staff Attitudes Toward the Basic Skills.	42
C. Principal's Attitudes Toward His/Her Role.	46
D. Staff Expectations about Student Learning.	49
III. Basic Skills Program - Reading	53
A. Developmental Reading.	56
B. Management of Developmental and Compensatory Reading Instruction	66
IV. Basic Skills Program - Mathematics	75
A. Developmental Mathematics.	78
B. Management of Developmental and Compensatory Mathematics Instruction	88
V. Instructional Time	97
A. Attendance of Staff and Students	99
B. Classroom Instructional Time	104
C. Student Engaged Time	107
VI. Parent and Community Relations	113
A. Parent and Community Relations and the Basic Skills Program.	117
B. Parent and Community Relations and the Non-Instructional Processes	121

GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWING BASIC SKILLS PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

This document presents guidelines for conducting a review of basic skills programs at individual schools. An introduction to the subject, this section discusses four topics: purpose of the guidelines, organization of the document, use of the materials, and discussion of major issues.

Purpose of the Guidelines

These guidelines were developed by the New Jersey State Department of Education for use by external experts who will visit local schools to analyze their basic skills programs and provide recommendations for program improvement. Comprehensive basic skills program reviews are normally scheduled for schools with many students who are below defined standards on the statewide tests of minimum basic skills.

These guidelines, however, may be used for different purposes in other situations. For example, a local school might use the guidelines for an internal review and analysis of its basic skills program. The process might also be employed by an individual teacher to analyze his/her classroom practices.

Organization of the Document

This document is divided into six main sections to facilitate the review of different areas of a school's basic skills program: District Policies and School Management Practices; Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations; Basic Skills Program - Reading; Basic Skills Program - Mathematics; Instructional Time; and Parent and Community Relations. Each section or area has seven parts which include:

1. a brief review of the research literature identifying alterable factors that research has shown are related to student learning in the basic skills
2. a statement of the factors in each area selected for intensive review
3. considerations for reviewing the factors
4. suggested procedures
5. suggested sources of information
6. a series of indicators to be used to guide the review of local programs and policies
7. forms to be used to summarize conclusions and recommendations about the school's program with reference to each factor.

Finally, the findings in each area are drawn together to form an overall conclusion about the school's basic skills program and to provide a list of recommendations in order of priority.

Use of the Materials

The review process is essentially the same for each of the five areas described above. The generic review process is outlined in this section, using as an example the area called "District Policies and School Management Practices."

The literature in the area of "District Policies and School Management Practices" suggests four factors related to student achievement in the basic skills: basic skills policies, discipline policies, staff development procedures, and decision-making procedures. The team member assigned to this area collects information about the factor, for example, discipline policies, by raising questions such as: Does this school have a written policy on discipline? Are the staff and students generally aware of the policy? Is the policy effective in reducing discipline problems? The team member may use individual or group interviews, observations, document analyses, or a combination of these methods to collect the relevant information.

After collecting information on these and other questions deemed important, the team member reaches a set of conclusions about the discipline policies in the school (e.g., that the school's policies on discipline are ambiguously stated, are not clear to the staff or students, and are rarely enforced). Recommendations for improvement are also provided.

Each factor is studied in this manner. Eventually, the team member meets with other members of the comprehensive review team to prepare a final team report.

Discussion of Major Issues

The user of these materials should be aware of three major issues: 1) the process the New Jersey State Department of Education employed to select the factors included in this document; 2) the critical role of the team member's judgment in the comprehensive review process; and 3) the need to emphasize how the factors are interrelated.

The sections, factors and indicators included in this document are derived from research results showing relationships between alterable aspects of a school's program and student performance in the basic skills. However, literally hundreds of research studies describing dozens of different factors have been reported in the research literature. Synthesizing these studies for use in the present situation proved a difficult undertaking since researchers often tend to use different labels to describe the same (or very similar) factors. Moreover, the research results in some areas are contradictory or inconclusive. These materials, therefore, represent a selected number of the factors and indicators reported in the literature for which there appears to be consistent support.

In addition to research support, the educational utility of the factors was considered in the selection process. That is, a second major criterion for including a factor (or a set of indicators related to the factor) was the utility of the concept for helping schools improve their educational programs. Educational utility is defined as consisting of three essential features: 1) team members and educators in the school situation can understand the description of the factor and relate to it an aspect of the district's educational program; 2) they can analyze programs in terms of the factor and suggest possible avenues for improvement; and 3) such improvements can logically lead to increased student performance in the basic skills. Pilot tests were conducted to ensure the educational utility of these factors and their indicators.

The judgment of the team member obviously plays an important role in the comprehensive review process. Essentially, the process is designed to focus attention on specific aspects of the school's program that may need to be improved in order to increase student performance in the basic skills. The team member decides which methods to use in collecting relevant information, and uses professional judgement in the criteria to be employed in reaching conclusions and making recommendations.

In the final analysis, considerable care should be taken to avoid overemphasis on the importance of any single weakness discovered in the school's program. Even schools with superior basic skills programs may find room for improvement in one area or another. Furthermore, a piecemeal effort to strengthen a particular problem area will probably have little or no effect on student learning. Significant improvements are more likely to result from a school-wide effort to strengthen the educational program across a number of deficient factors or areas.

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DISTRICT POLICIES AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
(PART I OF VI)

I. District Policies and School Management Practices

A substantial body of research indicates that school policies and practices can influence student performance in the basic skills. Rutter, et al. (1979), for example, argue that the school staff can develop an environment where the norms and values of the school are communicated through clear and consistent expectations and appropriate models with feedback. These norms and values may in turn be translated into more formal statements of school policies and practices that influence student achievement. Some of the building climate or environmental factors that the researchers found are important in influencing student achievement are: academic emphasis, rewards and praise, discipline and punishment, staff organization, and student/teacher out-of-class interaction.

Similar results were reported by other researchers with reference to specific policies and procedures in the larger school environment. Brookover and Lezotte (1976) found that schools may impact student achievement by fostering a school-wide emphasis on the basic skills. They believe the school needs to have clearly stated improvement objectives in the basic skills which are understood and applied by the school staff. Moreover, their research suggests that all teachers in the school need to assume some responsibility for teaching the basic reading and math skills. Other researchers who reach similar conclusions include Carroll and Chall (1975), Holtzman and Boes (1973), and Wilder (1977).

The importance of discipline policies and procedures is cited by a number of researchers (Kounin, 1970; Soar, 1973; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Coker, Loving and Coher, 1974; Bidwell, 1973; Evertson and Brophy, 1973; Moos and Moos, 1979). The general argument here is that it is possible to influence student achievement by fostering classroom environments that are organized and operated with a minimum amount of distraction, disruption, and confusion. To insure controlled classroom environments, discipline policies and procedures are needed which include clear specifications of expectations, standards for evaluating student behavior that are viewed as fair, and a consistent application of all rules for dealing with infractions.

Another factor that has received considerable attention in the research literature is school policies and procedures with reference to staff development. Schools can develop and implement staff training programs which address teacher needs and thereby impart skills that eventually influence student learning. Successful staff development appears to be influenced by the following factors: teachers are included in planning programs; demonstration, practice and feedback of concrete skills is emphasized; teachers play active roles in the training program; the training program is an active part of an on-going problem-solving or school improvement process; staff development is accompanied by continuing staff support from resource personnel; and training is conducted during school time and at school expense. Support for the above assertions can be found in the work of Lawrence (1974), Answith (1976), McLaughlin (1978), Lessor and Olson (1977) and Tolbert (1978).

The decision-making policies and patterns in a school setting can also affect student learning (Rutter, et al., 1979). The factors that appear significant in this case are: the decision-making patterns with reference to the basic skills instructional program, the extent to which decision-making in this area is centralized or shared, and the degree to which decisions are made in a structured manner. Some indications of effective decision-making patterns in the school might be: planning committees exist; a problem-solving orientation is taken toward decision-making, information about decisions is widely disseminated; and feedback on decisions is sought and used in future decision-making. Additional research to support these findings is cited by Benz (1975), Scott (1977) and in Putting Knowledge to Use (1976).

District Policies and School Management Practices

Summary of Variables

- A. Basic Skills Policies - The district has well defined policies in basic skills, the school has clearly stated improvement objectives,* and school-wide commitment to improving basic skills instruction.
- B. Discipline Policies - The school has a discipline code approved by the board of education with clear standards for behavior; it is communicated to all members of the school community; it is enforced by the school staff; and it is viewed as fair and consistently applied in all cases.
- C. Staff Development Policies - The school administration has a strong commitment to improving the skills of the staff; staff development programs are planned and conducted in collaboration with the teaching staff; and in-service training programs are evaluated and revised over time.
- D. Decision-Making Policies - The school has formulated procedures for decision-making with reference to basic skills instruction; decision-making structures are established within the school (e.g., curriculum planning committees).

*A distinction is made in this document between improvement objectives and instructional objectives. The improvement objectives referred to here are a school-wide set of objectives which define the desired improvement of the student body over a given period of time (e.g., the number of sixth grade students achieving the minimum standards on the MBS test will increase by 15% by 1981). Instructional objectives (discussed in another section) refer to a hierarchy of objectives in specific skill areas. These objectives guide daily instruction for individual students in the classroom.

I.A. BASIC SKILLS POLICIES

Factor: I.A.1. The district places major emphasis on the basic skills.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

As defined in this factor, "major emphasis" includes the commitment by districts and schools to instructional time, fiscal and human resources to conduct and improve the developmental and compensatory basic skills programs. It also includes efforts to communicate the importance of student achievement resulting from the program to students, staff and community. The team member is asked to determine the degree to which these commitments and communication efforts exist.

Suggested Procedures

Review written policies, job descriptions, and budget allocations for the developmental and compensatory basic skills programs, specific time commitments to basic skills instruction, in-service agenda, sample communiques emphasizing the importance of basic skills achievement, district and school improvement objectives, and class size for basic skills instruction including the compensatory program. Team members should then interview and observe classes to validate that the verbal and written commitments have been translated into action.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Superintendent
Principal
Business Manager
Board Secretary
Teacher

Materials

Board of Education policy manual
Budgets - Basic Skills Program Improvement Budget
Title I/SCE Applications
Job descriptions

Indicators

1. There is evidence that the board of education and administration are committed to the importance of basic skills instruction. (i.e., local funds are allocated to developmental and compensatory program operation and improvement, time and resources are provided for needed staff development and specific roles are assigned to supervise and articulate the basic skills program district wide).

Comments/Findings

Indicators

Comments/Findings

2. The district's commitment to basic skills instruction is communicated to staff, students and parents by formal and informal means, (e.g., parent/teacher conferences, test results, report cards), in a way that is understood by all (i.e., in their dominant language, free of jargon, etc.).
3. There are clearly stated district and school improvement objectives in basic skills related to skill attainment, program improvement and student progress.
4. The district and school improvement objectives have been developed with staff input.
5. The staff is aware of and, in general, accepts the improvement objectives.
6. All teachers who have students in their classroom who are deficient in basic skills accept responsibility for teaching basic skills as a component of the course.
7. District and school improvement objectives are evaluated each year and the results are communicated to the staff, the board of education and the community in a way that is understandable to all.
8. Specific minimum instructional time is defined by policy and practice for both the developmental and the compensatory basic skills programs.
9. The budget reflects local commitment to the maintenance and improvement of the developmental and compensatory basic skills programs.

Conclusions concerning the emphasis on basic skills.

Recommendations concerning the emphasis on basic skills:

394

Factor: I.A.2. District policy assigns overall basic skills instructional leadership to the principal

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Research indicates that, in effective schools, the principal is a dominant force in the success or failure of programs. To carry out this role, he/she must have the responsibility for, and authority to:

- . directly supervise all staff in the school.
- . be formally involved in program, resources, policy and procedural decisions.
- . manage the implementation of district and school basic skills policies, procedures and programs.

Suggested Procedures

In reviewing this factor, it is important to consider the official and perceived organizational relationship between the various administrators and teachers who are involved in basic skills instruction. The relationship between the following types of roles should be reviewed: principal, district director of curriculum, district directors of secondary and elementary education, Title I and compensatory education coordinators and teachers.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
District director of curriculum
District director of elementary and
secondary education
Teachers
Board member
Superintendent

Materials

Job description
Organizational charts
Title I/State Compensatory Education Application
Policy statements

1. Board of education policy assigns overall instructional leadership of the school to the principal.
2. The principal's job description includes supervisory responsibility for scheduling, program improvement, staff development and coordination of all basic skills programs in the school.
3. Responsibilities included in job descriptions of other administrative/supervisory staff in the district are not in conflict with those of the principal.
4. The principal's responsibilities are coordinated with the supervisors' responsibilities for basic skills (i.e., Title I/State Compensatory Education, reading, mathematics, bilingual).
5. The organizational roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for staff who impact on the basic skills program.
6. All staff who are providing instruction in basic skills report to the principal.
7. The district provides a formal structure for the principal's involvement in making decisions about students, staff, and program implementation at the school level and about policies, procedures and program structure district-wide.

Conclusions concerning the assigned instructional role of the principal:

Recommendations concerning the assigned instructional role of the principal:

Factor: I.B.1. The school and classrooms operate with a minimum amount of distraction, disruption and confusion.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

Not everyone will agree with what constitutes "good discipline" in the school and classroom. Some may argue this means students are always quiet, while others feel some noise and interaction between students is normal. When reviewing this factor, try to determine the degree to which student and staff behavior supports or detracts from instructional time and student motivation in the basic skills. Also, determine through interviews with staff whether the influence of drugs, alcohol, violence or vandalism in the school reduces the students' ability to concentrate on instruction.

Suggested Procedures

Team members should begin to collect information concerning this factor on the initial tour of the building and in subsequent classroom observations. The perceptions of a representative sample of teachers, students, parents and administrators should also be sought. Office records of suspensions, disciplinary actions, violence and vandalism should be reviewed, also.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Guidance counselors
Teachers
Aides
Students
Parents

Materials

Discipline referrals
Records of vandalism/violence
Suspension/expulsion records
Guidance records re: student use of drugs & alcohol

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. Discipline/disruption is not a problem in the classroom. 2. Discipline/disruption is not a problem in school corridors, cafeteria, auditorium, etc. 3. Vandalism is not a major problem in the school. 4. Violence is not a problem in the school. 5. The use of drugs and/or alcohol by students is not a problem. 6. Staff behavior in maintaining good discipline is firm positive and fair. 7. All staff are involved in maintaining discipline in the school.	

Conclusions concerning school discipline:

Recommendations concerning school discipline:

Factor: I.B.2. The district has developed, and the school board has approved, a student code of conduct and has established the rights and responsibilities of staff, students and parents in the implementation of the conduct code.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

This factor is only relevant if the school is experiencing an excessive amount of disruption, violence or vandalism. Studies have shown that the first step in reducing disruption in the school is to make clear the expected code of conduct. Such codes are most effective when they are short and developed with input from students, parents and staff. The code must be consistently and fairly applied to all students. It is important that students not involved in causing disruption not be penalized in an attempt to control other students. All staff should have responsibilities for maintaining order in the entire school.

Suggested Procedures

If disruptive conduct and vandalism seem to be major problems in the school, the team member should begin by obtaining a copy of the existing district and/or building code of conduct. Next, the team member should talk to administrators, teachers, custodians, lunch room aides and students to determine their knowledge of the existing code of conduct and implementation practices. Finally, the reviewer should talk to a sampling of parents concerning their perceptions of the safety and orderly operation of the school.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Students
Aides
Teachers
School nurse
Principal
Guidance personnel
Parents
Custodians
Community members in neighborhood
Police

Material

Code of conduct
Policies on student
behavior, discipline practices
Policies regarding rights and responsibilities
of staff, students and parents.

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. The board of education has approved a code of conduct for students.
2. The rights and responsibilities of students, staff and parents have been defined in terms of maintaining discipline.
3. Students, staff and parents were involved in developing the code of conduct and in defining rights and responsibilities.
4. Students and parents have copies of the code, are familiar with and understand their rights and responsibilities.
5. The code of conduct is consistently and fairly applied to all students.
6. Students who behave in a constructive manner are not penalized in an attempt to control disruptive students.
7. The code of conduct is short, simply stated and straight-forward.
8. Plans have been developed and implemented to reduce violence and/or vandalism.
9. The school works with other agencies to reduce incidents of violence and vandalism and the use of drugs and alcohol.
10. All staff have and assume responsibility for maintaining order in the entire school.

Conclusions concerning discipline policies and plans:

Recommendations concerning discipline policies and plans:

405

I.C.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Factor: I.C.1. The board of education has a policy on staff development which covers in-service professional days, consultants and incentives.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

The team member is asked to collect information regarding the existence, staff knowledge of and actual implementation of district and/or school policies governing staff development activities. Consideration also needs to be given to staff perceptions about the adequacy of these policies and the opportunities they afford.

Suggested Procedures

Review any policy statements regarding staff development to determine what the district supports. Review in-service plans and agenda, records of staff use of professional days, attendance at special conferences and reimbursement records for staff taking courses, to determine whether the policies are being implemented. Discuss staff development policies with several staff members. Find out who is assigned responsibility for staff development at the district and/or school level. Do these people consider that the policies provide adequate incentives to staff development?

Suggested Sources of InformationPeople

Teachers, classroom & supplemental
Aides
Principal
Basic skills supervisory staff

Materials

Copies of board of education policies
In-service plans and agenda
Staff records regarding use of
professional days

Indicators

1. A policy exists which provides for a variety of staff development activities and incentives for staff involvement.
2. Staff is familiar enough with the policies and practices to take advantage of them and are motivated to do so.

Comments/Findings

407

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. Someone has been assigned responsibility for managing staff development activities and he/she carries out that responsibility.	

Conclusions concerning board of education policy on staff development:

Recommendations concerning board of education policy on staff development:

408

Factor: I.C.2. Staff development activities in basic skills are directly related to the skills and knowledge needed by the staff to implement the school's basic skills program and are part of a continuous problem-solving and school improvement process in the basic skills.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

In terms of basic skills achievement, it is important that there be adequate training in the basic skills program actually used in the classroom. Staff development activities should be based on the staff's analysis of strengths and weaknesses, should be part of a formal, on-going process of program improvement and should be periodically evaluated by the staff.

Suggested Procedures

Review written records of staff involvement in any basic skills staff development activity to determine the variety and frequency of these activities and the levels of staff participation. Interview staff at all levels to determine the accuracy of the records, staff perception of the value of those activities and the degree to which they support the program in use, or the program planned for use. Ask for examples of how the staff has applied its training to the actual classroom. Identify program improvement planning efforts such as the T & E committee, curriculum council, grade level meeting, etc.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers, classroom and supplemental
Aides
Principal
Basic skills supervisory staff

Materials

Copies of board of education policies
In-service plans and agenda staff
records regarding use of professional
days

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Teachers and principals help plan staff development activities in basic skills for individuals and/or groups.

100

Indicators

Comments/Findings

2. The staff development activities are consistent with the basic skills improvement objectives.
3. Staff development activities use the skills of professionals from within and outside the district.
4. In-service programs are conducted during school time and at school expense.
5. In-service programs are of sufficient length and quality to meet the identified needs of staff in basic skills.
6. Teachers are active participants in staff development activities.
7. Consultants, when used for in-service, gear their presentation to the needs of the staff.
8. Professional days are used by staff to expand their knowledge of basic skills instruction.
9. Teachers utilize the information and skills from staff development activities in the classroom.
10. Time is provided for department and cross-department level meetings to discuss the implementation of the basic skills program.
11. The results of state and standardized test programs are discussed as they relate to program improvement.
12. Staff development activities are accompanied by on-going support from resource personnel.

411

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

- | | |
|--|--|
| 13. Staff development activities include training in teaching basic skills in other subject areas. | |
|--|--|

Conclusions concerning staff development activities:

Recommendations concerning staff development activities:

I.D. **DECISION-MAKING POLICIES**

Factor: I.D. There is a defined process for making decisions about the basic skills program, its improvement and policies which guide staff in the essential areas of decision making.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

As the team member reviews decision-making regarding the basic skills program and its improvement, he/she is asked to determine whether the policies:

- a. provide a formal decision-making structure
- b. make clear who makes what decisions
- c. ensure that decisions are based on the best program management information available to the staff at that time.

The team member is also asked to determine whether staff is knowledgeable about the policies, supports them and subsequently participates in decision-making activities.

Suggested Procedures

Identify the last major decision related to basic skills instruction and its improvement. Through interviews and the review of committee minutes, etc., determine how the decision was made and implemented. Also try to ascertain whether staff supports the decision. Confirm that the decision-making process was representative of most others.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Basic skills supervisory staff
Teachers, classroom and supplemental

Materials

Policy statements
Minutes of committee meetings

Indicators

Comments/Finding

1. Policies exist which provide a formal decision-making structure regarding basic skills program improvement.
2. Policies exist which provide for program decisions regarding:
 - a. the instructional content
 - b. the means used to achieve desired outcomes
 - c. the evaluation of pupil progress including the promotion and retention of students
 - d. specific procedures for meeting the special needs of some students (e.g., non-English proficient, mainstreamed special education students, gifted and talented, etc.)
 - e. the effective and efficient recording and reporting of pupil progress to students, staff and parents/community.
3. Staff generally support policies related to #2 above.
4. Decisions about changes in basic skills programs are based on an analysis of skill attainment, program strengths and weaknesses, teacher judgement and research findings about better ways of conducting the program. Also, those affected most by a decision are involved in making it. (Note: research findings include such things as time on task, discipline, absenteeism, role of the teacher and principal, etc.)

Indicators	Comments/Findings
5. The administrators and teachers in the school are involved in: a. curriculum planning decisions b. textbook and material selection c. development of assessment and evaluation procedures d. determination of the improvement objectives e. determination of the criteria for grouping students for instruction f. development of the pupil progress recording and reporting system 6. Staff in general know about and support most of the major decisions regarding program improvement made over the last year or so.	

Conclusions concerning decision-making policies and practices:

Recommendations concerning decision-making policies and practices:

STAFF KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS
(PART II OF VI)

II. Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations

Researchers and educators have reasoned that what the school staff knows or feels or thinks may affect to some degree student learning of the basic skills. Centra and Potter (1977), however, point out that staff characteristics do not affect student learning directly. Knowledge, feelings, or understandings tend to influence staff behavior which, in turn, may affect student learning of the basics. Thus, for example, knowledge of reading content and teaching techniques may influence a teacher's behavior in structuring the instructional program. In this sense, staff characteristics may have an indirect, but, nevertheless, important effect on student learning.

A variety of alterable staff characteristics of this kind has been identified by researchers as important contributors to student learning. A teacher's knowledge of the content area he or she is responsible for teaching is one factor. The rationale is that the teacher who knows reading or math content is better able to teach it to students (Bidwell and Kasarda, 1975; Goodman, 1959; Hanushek, 1970). Further evidence of the importance of teacher knowledge of content area comes from a study comparing high and low performing schools (Delaware Department of Public Instruction, 1977). A salient characteristic of the teachers in high performing schools is their knowledge of the structure and substance of the subject being taught.

The teacher's attitudes toward the nature and quality of the basic skills instructional program are another factor that may influence student learning. This factor might be defined as the extent of teacher agreement with the overall basic skills philosophy of the school, the goals of instruction, the instructional content and methods, and the measures of achievement. In effect, the underlying rationale is that student learning may be enhanced if the teacher's attitudes are positive toward the school's instructional policies and program requirements. Research supporting this factor is reported by the Delaware Department of Public Instruction (1977).

Teacher expectations about student learning are another characteristic that has received considerable attention in the research literature (Brophy and Good, 1972; Pidgeon, 1970; Rosenthal and Jacobsen, 1968). The theory is that the teacher's expectations about student abilities to learn may affect the teacher's behavior in the classroom. As an example, teachers may direct most of their attention and provide most rewards to students they believe are fast learners (Rist, 1973). The research generally suggests that student learning will be enhanced if teachers assume all students are capable of mastering the basic skills instruction provided in the school. A related point is that teachers in high performing schools tend to avoid negative labeling of students and use positive rather than negative techniques to motivate students to learn (Medley, 1978; Harris and Serwer, 1966; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974).

The principal is typically a dominant force in the school environment, and his/her role in influencing student learning has captured the interest of researchers. Chester et al. (1975) identify two different roles a principal might play: a) an administrative role designed to achieve a smoothly running organization, and b) a professional role concerned with improving classroom processes, encouraging teacher growth, and continually

evaluating pupil learning. The professionally-oriented principal expresses more concern about instruction than administration, communicates views about instruction, assumes responsibility for instructional decisions, coordinates instructional programs, emphasizes academic standards, meets regularly with teachers to discuss classroom activities, acts as a disciplinarian, rates staff highly, and has positive perceptions of personal rapport with teachers, parents, and pupils. (Key, 1972; Wellisch, MacQueen, Carriere, & Duck, 1978; Weber, 1971; State of New York, 1974; Edwards, 1978; Brookover and Lezotte, 1977; Austin, 1978; Irvine, 1979). In short, all the above research indicates that professionally-oriented principals are more effective in increasing student achievement than principals who have other priorities, attitudes, and values.

Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations

Summary of Variables

- A. Teacher Knowledge of Instructional Content - The staff is knowledgeable about the structure and substance of the reading and math content they are responsible for teaching.
- B. Staff Attitudes Toward the Basic Skills Program - The staff agrees with the overall priority placed on basic skills instruction, the goals of the program, and the content and methods used.
- C. Principals' Attitudes Toward their Role - Principals place high priority on the role of instructional leadership, and play an active professional role in the basic skills program of the school.
- D. Staff Expectations About Student Learning - Administrators and teachers believe all students are capable of mastering the basic skills, avoid the use of negative labels for students, and use positive techniques (e.g., rewards and praise) to motivate students to learn.

II.A. TEACHER KNOWLEDGE OF INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

Factor: II.A. Teachers have sufficient knowledge to implement effectively the school's basic skills program.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

"Sufficient knowledge" of the Basic Skills Program is defined here as knowledge of:

- . the district and school policies and procedures related to the developmental and compensatory basic skills programs.
- . the district structure and substance of the subject matter (i.e., math or reading).
- . the various staff members' teaching and administrative/supervisory roles and responsibilities in the instructional process.

Suggested Procedures

Review policies regarding program structure and implementation, sample staff college transcripts, job descriptions, staff in-service agenda and staff meeting agenda to determine what information staff has received. Interview staff and administrative/supervisory staff to determine: 1) its perceptions of staff roles; 2) the relationship of various teaching and administrative/supervisory staff involved in the basic skills program; 3) the degree to which staff development activities are meeting its needs; and 4) its satisfaction with its own professional preparation. Observe a wide range of classroom instructional situations to determine the techniques used for presenting the content to students of varied levels of development.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Basic skills supervisory staff
Resource teachers
Classroom teachers

Materials

Policy statements
Job descriptions
Staff meeting agenda and minutes
Staff in-service descriptions and/or agenda
Sample staff transcripts

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. Written policies and procedures are available and staff is knowledgeable of them. 2. Undergraduate and graduate preparation of staff has been adequate for implementing its roles in basic skills instruction. 3. Staff development activities are conducted to enhance content knowledge and instructional techniques in response to identified needs. 4. Teachers have been trained to use the materials provided for basic skills instruction and indicate the training has been adequate. 5. Teachers have sufficient knowledge of testing to use test results effectively in planning basic skills instruction. • 6. Teachers and counselors are knowledgeable of various roles and responsibilities of staff assigned to implement the basic skills program. Teachers are also knowledgeable of how instructional resources and supervisory roles are interrelated.	

Conclusions concerning the overall level of teacher knowledge:

1. Reading

2. Math

Recommendations concerning the overall level of teacher knowledge:

1. Reading

2. Math

II.B. STAFF ATTITUDES TOWARD THE BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM

Factor: II.B. Teachers have positive attitudes toward basic skills instruction.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

As a factor, teachers' attitudes toward the basic skills program focuses on the degree to which teachers agree with essential elements of the basic skills program (i.e., agreement with philosophy and policies governing the basic skills program, the goals and objectives of instruction, the instructional materials and methods, the standards and measures of achievement utilized and the form of remediation).

Suggested Procedures

Informal meetings with small groups of staff may provide the best setting for addressing this factor. Staff attitudes may be observed; reasons for these attitudes may be discussed with the staff. Also, try to determine the degree to which the school provides opportunities for staff to share ideas related to the program, its structure and its improvement.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Teachers
Basic skills supervisory staff
Students

Materials

Records of staff involvement in basic skills program development and improvement activities

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. Teachers and counselors agree that the overall emphasis the school places on basic skills instruction is appropriate.	
2. Teachers and counselors accept the objectives of the basic skills program as something which can be achieved.	

3. Teachers and counselors feel that the staff has made a strong effort to achieve the objectives of the basic skills program.
4. Teachers and counselors feel the measures of student performance in basic skills used by the school are fair and valid in:
 - a. mathematics
 - b. reading
5. Teachers and counselors believe that the instructional methods used in the school are appropriate in:
 - a. mathematics
 - b. reading
6. Teachers and counselors believe the school has a well coordinated program in:
 - a. mathematics
 - b. reading
7. Teachers and counselors feel that adequate provisions are made for remediation in:
 - a. mathematics
 - b. reading
8. Teachers and counselors feel they are adequately involved in decisions related to basic skills instruction.
9. Teachers and counselors accept the premise that all students can achieve.

430

Indicators	Comments/Findings
10. Teachers and counselors feel they are provided adequate support through: - in-service training - instructional leadership - resource staff - basic material - supplemental materials - library/media services - supplemental staff - scheduling - counseling services - other	

Conclusions concerning the overall attitudes of the staff toward the basic skills program:

1. Reading

2. Math

Recommendations concerning the overall attitudes of the staff toward the basic skills program:

1. Reading

2. Math

432

II.C. PRINCIPAL'S ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS/HER ROLE

Factor: II.C. The principal provides strong instructional leadership in basic skills.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Research indicates that the principal is a key factor in the success or failure of the instructional program. His/her ability to influence the program falls into two categories. First, the principal's authority to act as the instructional leader in his/her school as addressed in IA.2 (District policy assigns overall instructional leadership responsibility to the principal). Second is the principal's implementation of that leadership role. In addressing this research factor there is a need to analyze the principal's administrative role as well as the instructional leadership role. Research indicates a positive impact on the basic skills program occurs when the principal emphasizes an instructional leadership role.

"Strong instructional leadership" includes the following attributes:

- . Communicates to staff, students and community the importance of basic skills achievement
- . Sets a positive and supportive environment for instruction with staff, students and parents
- . Plays an active role in observing, discussing and coordinating the instructional program
- . Assumes responsibility for instructional decisions and program planning and improvement
- . Monitors student achievement

Suggested Procedures

Several written materials may serve as indicators that the principal is in fact assuming an instructional leadership role, (i.e., staff meeting agenda which focuses on basic skills program discussions and decisions, in-service emphasis on basic skills improvement, newsletters to parents and community, staff observations concerning principal's role and related program improvement plans). Interviews with the principal, basic skills supervisory staff, teachers, students and parents will help to determine what the principal's role is in leading and improving basic skills.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
District level administrators
District basic skills supervisory staff
Teachers
Students
Parents

Materials

Staff meeting agenda
Inservice agenda
Newsletter to parents and community
Staff observations concerning principal's role
Related program improvement plans
Committee reports
School basic skills budget requests

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. The principal places priority on teaching reading and mathematics to all students.
2. The principal places greater emphasis in terms of his/her time on tasks that lead to improved instruction rather than routine management tasks.
3. The principal has adequate knowledge of basic skills programs to provide leadership in instruction.
4. The principal has adequate knowledge of the basic skills program as it relates to students of limited English proficiency or with a native language other than English.
5. The principal has responsibility for ensuring that the developmental, compensatory, bilingual and ESL programs in the school are coordinated.
6. The principal ensures that the staff maintains good discipline in the school.
7. The principal sees that lesson plans are reviewed to ensure that instruction addresses identified improvement objectives related to skill attainment and student needs.
8. The principal sees that classrooms are visited regularly to observe reading and mathematics instruction.
9. The principal sees that the observations of basic skills instruction are discussed with teachers.
10. The principal believes that all students can learn basic skills.
11. The principal uses the results of basic skills assessment to guide the staff in program planning.

Indicators	Comments/Findings
12. The principal ensures that the staff with the greatest expertise in basic skills are responsible for planning and implementing the basic skills program. 13. The principal meets regularly with teachers to discuss the implementation of the basic skills plan. 14. The principal provides support for the basic skills program through budget requests. 15. The principal provides adequate staff development experiences in basic skills to address the needs of staff.	

Conclusions concerning the principal's attitude towards his/her role:

Recommendations concerning the principal's attitude towards his/her role:

00 436

II.D. STAFF EXPECTATIONS ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING

Factor: II.D. Administrators, guidance counselors and teachers have high expectations for students' learning and mastery of the basic skills.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Key considerations include: a) staff demonstration of high expectations for all students; b) emphasis on positive rather than negative motivation; c) equal effort to instruct all students regardless of learning level or style and; d) student perception that all of the above are true.

Suggested Procedures

This factor addresses a basic educational belief. As such, it tends to illicit "right" responses. It may be helpful to the team member to collect information informally through:

- . small group discussion with staff and students
- . classroom observations
- . review of student work
- . review of student grading procedures/criteria actually used by staff
- . review of guidance and counseling services for evidence that all students are provided with equal opportunity, access and support

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Administrators
Guidance counselors
Students

Materials

Student work
Classroom and hallway displays of student work
Grading criteria and procedures (district, school and/or individual staff member)
Student record folders

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. The school has written basic skills standards which reflect high expectations for all students. 2. Teachers indicate a belief that all the students in their classroom can master basic skills. 3. Administrators and guidance counselors indicate a belief that all the students in their school can master basic skills. 4. Teachers give equal attention to all learners in the classroom regardless of learning level, style or special needs. Equal attention includes such things as: time, kind of student/teacher interaction, positive support, etc. 5. Teachers avoid negatively labeling students. 6. Teachers use positive techniques (e.g. rewards, praise) to motivate students to learn. 7. Students indicate teachers believe in their ability to learn the basic skills. 8. Teachers in other than basic skills content areas believe that all students can master basic skills. 9. Teachers in other than basic skills subjects believe they have a responsibility to contribute to basic skills instruction.	

Conclusions concerning the overall expectations of staff about student learning:

Recommendations concerning the overall expectations of staff about student learning:

440

READING BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM
(PART III OF VI)

III. Basic Skills Program

Reading

Much research has been done concerning instruction in the basic skills. What emerges is a consistent pattern of findings that supports curriculum which include the following interrelated elements:

1. Expected outcomes - Sequenced skill arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels.
2. Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
3. Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he/she has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
4. Record keeping system - The student record keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. The system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school within the district where there is high mobility of students. (Cooley and Leinhardt, 1975; Harris and Serwer, 1966; Pidgeon, 1970; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Education Programs that Work, USOE, 1978; Brophy and Evertson 1974; Tikunoff, Berlinger and Rist, 1975; Bond and Dyskstra, 1967; Michigan Department of Education, 1976; Edmonds, 1978; Bloom, 1980.)

Many programs incorporate these elements. Some of the most common labels include aligned curriculum, Right-to-Read, diagnostic/prescriptive, mastery learning, structured and continuous progress. There are hundreds of specific programs with these characteristics which research has shown to be effective. The major characteristic of these programs is the concept of taking the individual student through a sequenced set of learning outcomes at a rate consistent with his/her ability. The assumption is made that the student learns a higher level skill following mastery of a lower skill. This approach differs from grade level oriented programs which focus on the skills expected to be learned by the average student in a given grade.

Essential to the successful implementation of the curriculum component are the coordination and integration of instruction in basic skills both horizontally and vertically. The management design must draw together all personnel, materials and services (regardless of funding sources) in a uniform basic skills effort across all grade levels. The management design focuses on a developmental program aimed at reducing the need for remediation. Remediation services (Title I, State Compensatory Education, volunteer services, child study

teams, etc.) are closely coordinated with the developmental program. The classroom teacher is the manager of the child's program. All structural elements of the district's organization and all curricular components of the instructional program are centered on the primacy of the classroom teacher's role (Brinson, 1980).

The aligned curriculum approach does not require one-to-one instruction; however, it does require individualized planning and record keeping. Students may still be taught in groups, but frequent assessment of progress is used to regroup students based on current needs. The most effective grouping has the leader working with small groups of three to seven or large groups of eight or more in some situations. Children working alone or with one or two other children and the teacher is negatively correlated with achievement (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974; Soar, 1973).

The behavior exhibited by teachers forms the group rules by which instruction and interaction occur in the classroom. Research concludes that effective teachers provide strong leadership by directing activities in a business-like way, as they manage the tasks and interactions of the classroom (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974; Soar 1973; Solomon and Kendall 1976). High achievement is more likely when teachers select the focus of the activities and apply appropriate principles of learning.

Achievement is lower in classes having a large amount of unsupervised seat work (Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Soar, 1973; and Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974). Moreover, effective teachers occupy the central role in the classroom and organize learning around questions which they pose. Inherent in management techniques of these teachers is the ability to maintain an intermediate position with respect to classroom control. Effective management in program improvement uses varied methods of control as opposed to a self-defeating management style based purely on criticism and rigidity (Soar, 1977). A well-managed classroom is one in which conditions for constructive rather than disruptive, deviate behavior prevail (Soar, 1973; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Bemis and Luft, 1970; Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976).

Another subject of study has been compensatory programs in basic skills. Schools have the option of serving the remedial needs of students in the regular classroom or in separate classes. In the regular classroom, the student to adult ratio is reduced, usually by adding a remedial teacher or aide for part of the day. However, some schools schedule those students, not needing remediation, for other activities during the school day, leaving the regular classroom teacher with fewer students for remediation.

The other option for remediation is the use of "pull-out." Students in need of remediation are sent to separate remedial classes for part of the day. Research has shown that "pull-out" as a method of remediation results in the negative labeling of many students. Teachers view these students as less capable and, consequently, lower their expectations for them. Lower teacher expectations, therefore, result in lower levels of student achievement. Another problem with "pull-out" is the frequent lack of coordination of teaching strategies, between the teacher and the special teacher, for the child's basic skills improvement plan. This results, then, in the student spending less time on tasks designed to correct basic skills deficiencies. Further, there is a consistent negative relationship between the time pupils spend in "pull-out" classes and reading and mathematics achievement (Glass and Smith, 1977).

Basic Skills Program Mathematics

Summary of Variables

A. The Developmental Instructional Program

The planned and classroom implemented curriculum includes the following aligned and interrelated elements:

- . Expected outcomes - Sequenced skill arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels and are related to the standardized tests used in the district.
- . Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- . Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- . Record-keeping system The student record-keeping format is based on the concept of the continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. Within a district where there is high mobility of students, the system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school.

B. Compensatory Reading:

- . Supports the developmental program.
- . If remediation takes place through "pull-out", the negative effects are minimized.
- . If remediation takes place in the classroom, provision is made for adequate services for all students need remediation.

C. Instructional management includes:

- . classroom teacher-managed instruction
- . strong direct leadership by teachers
- . flexible grouping of students based on assessed learner needs
- . positive methods of control
- . in-class compensatory education
- . lack of classroom disruption

III.A. DEVELOPMENTAL READING

Factor: III.A.1 Teachers have and use clearly defined and sequenced outcomes of instruction such as a skills array or objectives

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Factors A.1-A.5 in this section are highly interrelated. It is essential that there be congruence between the objectives of learning, instruction, assessment and record keeping. Determining clearly what is to be learned is the first step in this sequence. The team member is asked to determine whether or not the school has formally defined expected outcomes and the degree to which they are used by the classroom teachers in directing instruction.

Suggested Procedures

Determine whether or not a skills array/objectives has been adopted for the reading program and secure copies for your review. Determine what level of involvement reading staff had in the selection or development of the skills array/objectives. Through interviews and classroom observations determine whether the skills array/objectives are used to guide instruction.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Reading coordinator
Teacher
English department chairperson

Materials

Curriculum guides
Skills array/objectives
Lesson plans

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. There is a skill array in reading which actually guides instruction across all grades.	
2. The English teachers and specialists support the skills array as what should be taught.	

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. English teachers and specialists base reading instruction on the <i>same skills array</i>. 4. If there is a high degree of student mobility between schools in the district, there is one reading skills array used to guide reading instruction in all schools. 5. The skills array in use is appropriate for high school age students. 6. The skills array has been analyzed and appropriate skills are reinforced in all courses enrolling students who are deficient in basic skills.	

Conclusions concerning existence and use of a skill array or instructional objectives:

Recommendations concerning existence and use of skills array/objectives:

00 450

Factor: III.A.2. Classroom instructional materials, teaching strategies and student activities in reading are directly referenced to the skills array in all classrooms and are sufficient in quantity and variety to respond to the learning needs of all children.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

This factor asks first whether the instructional materials and activities have been directly coded or referenced to the skills array; second, whether the related materials and activities are used in actual classroom practice and, finally, the degree to which the materials and instructional activities give all children a chance to successfully learn essential reading skills.

Suggested Procedures

The focus of this section is to determine whether the material and instructional activities are matched to the learning outcomes as defined and assessed. Most teachers rely heavily on the textbook series and supplement it with other activities and material. However, many schools also have a curriculum guide which describes the approved program. The team member needs to look at what is supposed to be the "official" curriculum and what is actually the "in use" curriculum, and the degree to which it reflects the skills array/objectives.

The team member should determine if the skills array/objectives are used as a criteria for selecting new textbooks or materials.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Reading teachers
English department chairperson

Material

Curriculum guides
Textbooks
Supplemental materials

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Instructional materials have been analyzed and correlated to the skills array in a manner which facilitates their use by teachers and identifies mismatches or omissions in skill development.

451

452

Indicators

Comments/Findings

2. There are adequate materials to support instruction in specific skills, particularly those skills identified as in need of improvement.
3. The materials are geared to the ability levels of the students, appropriate for the interests and age levels of the students and responsive to special learning needs (such as students with limited English proficiency).
4. Reading skills are incorporated in other subject areas.
5. The reading levels of textbooks used in all courses are appropriate for the general reading levels of the students in the school.
6. The need of students of limited English proficiency or with another native language has been considered in selecting textbooks for all courses.
7. School media resources are available to support the instructional program in reading.
8. The resources of the school library are adequate to support the reading program.
9. Districts with a high degree of student mobility between schools coordinate the curriculum across all schools.
10. The school curriculum is coordinated with sending and receiving schools in the district.

Indicators

Comments/Findings

- | | |
|--|--|
| 11. The remedial services are part of the overall English curriculum of the school. | |
| 12. If reading instruction takes place for some students in vocational schools the instruction is coordinated with the sending schools basic skills program. | |

Conclusions concerning instructional materials and procedures:

Recommendations concerning instructional materials and procedures:

Factor: III.A.3. Assessment procedures used in the school for assessing specific achievements and needs of students in reading are based on the skills array and the actual material covered in the classrooms.

Considerations in Reviewing This Factor

The team member is asked to confirm that the assessment instrument and procedures are based on the skills array and classroom instruction. This requires looking at the total student evaluation design including such things as teacher-made tests, district/school standardized testing, MBS test usage and any other sources used by teachers to measure pupils' progress.

Suggested Procedures

Make a determination, through interviews with central and school staff assigned to the MBS test administration and/or locally selected test administration, as to what efforts were made to analyze the tests and other indicators of pupil progress to determine their validity as measures of the instructional program. Find out if an individual or group has been assigned responsibility for analyzing and communicating the findings regarding the alignment of instruction and assessment. Where possible, take a random sample of objectives and ask staff to demonstrate how they assess these items.

Sources of Information

People

Central staff
Principals
Teachers

Materials

MBS test printouts
Report of MBS test results to
board of education
Agenda for staff meeting on MBS tests results
Report of locally selected test results

Indicators

1. Staff formally matched pupil progress assessment procedures to the skills array/objectives including:
 - a. MBS test items
 - b. the school standardized testing program items

Comments/Findings

456

Indicators

Comments/Findings

- c. teacher-made tests
- d. means of assessment used by staff other than tests to measure pupil progress on the skills array.
- 2. The MBS test has been analyzed to determine which skills on the district's skills array have been mastered and which need additional emphasis.
- 3. The results of the MBS tests, the district's standardized tests and other tests have been analyzed to determine skill mastery level for all students, including those of limited English proficiency.
- 4. Teachers use the results of student assessment to plan instruction.
- 5. Standardized assessment instruments have been analyzed to determine if the material covered on the tests is being taught.
- 6. Reports of the results of the MBS test and the school's standardized testing program reflecting individual and group data are distributed to all staff for instructional and program planning purposes.
- 7. Classroom assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- 8. Students are grouped for instruction based on current identified needs.
- 9. Parents and students know the objectives of the program and the individual student's mastery level.

457

Conclusions concerning the record keeping system:

Recommendations concerning the record keeping system:

Factor: III.A.4. There is a classroom record keeping and reporting system which tracks the progress of of students based on the defined learning outcomes in reading across all grade levels and allows for frequent feedback to the students, parents and teacher on the progress of students at all grade levels.

Considerations in Reviewing This Factor

The reviewer is asked to determine whether:

- a. the record keeping system reflects the skills array/objectives
- b. the teachers use the recorded information for instructional and program management purposes, and
- c. the reporting system ensures that students know the objectives of the reading program and the student's progress toward achieving them.

Suggested Procedures

Request samples of the record keeping and reporting materials used in the district and school. Determine if there is a correlation between the school skills array, the skills assessed, skills recorded and reported and textbook used for instruction. There should be consistency within and across grade levels. Skills need to be identified in some way as having been introduced, mastered and reinforced.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Supervisor(s)
Principal
Resource staff
Teachers
English department chairperson

Materials

Student record cards
Individual teacher records
Skills arrays
Curriculum guides

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. The school's skills array is used as the basis of a standardized record keeping system which tracks the progress of students in the classroom and across grades. 2. When the district has high student mobility between schools, there is a standard record keeping system district-wide which allows for tracking of student progress between schools. 3. When part of the basic skills instruction takes place in a vocational school, records are regularly shared between schools.	

Conclusions concerning student record keeping:

Recommendations concerning student record keeping:

451

III.B. MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL AND COMPENSATORY READING INSTRUCTION

Factor: III.B.1. There is a plan which guides basic skills instruction.

Considerations for Reviewing This Factor

The district plan for basic skills instruction should be a written plan which includes, but is not necessarily limited to: a) a definition of a developmental program, b) a definition of compensatory services, c) a projection of staff development activities for the year based on identified needs, d) program improvement objectives and, e) clearly defined lines of responsibility. The team member is asked to determine the plan's existence and the degree to which it has been implemented.

Suggested Procedures

Identify and secure a copy of the written plan for reading instruction and review it to determine the degree to which it provides a clear definition of a coordinated program, roles and responsibilities of administrative, supervisory and instructional staff, and the identification of program and staff improvement activities. Observe classrooms and review lesson plans, inservice agenda, and basic skills improvement activities to determine the degree to which the plan is being implemented. This information can be collected at the same time information is collected for IV A.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Reading coordinators
Principals
Students
English department chairperson

Materials

Basic skills plan
Lesson plans
Inservice agenda
Basic skills committee agenda
Minutes from staff meetings such as T & E,
department or grade level meetings

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. There is a written basic skills plan.
2. The plan is being implemented by the staff.
3. The plan has a management design which draws together all personnel, materials and services (regardless of funding sources).
4. The principal is assigned the overall responsibility for the basic skills instruction in the school.
5. There are clear lines of responsibility concerning basic skills instruction in the school and in the district.
6. Improvement objectives for mathematics instruction have been established and communicated to staff, students and parents and focus on such improvements as:
 - a. reducing the number of students needing compensatory services
 - b. ameliorating identified program weaknesses
 - c. emphasizing/reinforcing the specific skills with which many students have difficulty.
 - d. including the interim objectives resulting from MBS testing and T&E basic skills planning.
10. Staff development activities are targeted at identified needs and are perceived by staff as responsive to those needs.
11. Students of limited English proficiency in need of compensatory education are served in programs where their individual needs are addressed.

464

Indicators

Comments/Findings

12. The negative labeling of students requiring remediation is avoided by other students, teachers and administrators.
13. All students needing remedial instruction are receiving such instruction.
14. The classroom teacher is actively involved in the identification of students who need remediation.
15. During the remedial instruction the adult to student ratio:
 - a. allows for remediation of specific learning deficiencies
 - b. allows for a significant increase in individual student time-on-task.
16. The classroom teacher actively participates in school/district decisions about what will be taught, how the program will operate and how the program may be improved.
17. Students are given academic credit for achievement in basic skills courses.
18. If reading teachers are used they are active members of the English Department.
19. Remedial courses have equal priority with other courses in scheduling and space allocations.
20. Participation in remedial courses does not preclude participation in special interest courses (i.e., vocational arts).
21. Counselors advise students on appropriate courses to take in basic skills.

Conclusions concerning the basic skills plan:

Recommendations concerning the basic skills plan:

466

Factor: III.B.2. There are individual instructional plans for each student who achieves below the state standard in reading at the sixth grade level or above.

Consideration for Reviewing this Factor

The team member is asked to: a) confirm the existence of individual instructional plans for students requiring remediation and, b) determine whether the plan provides instructional direction for the developmental program and compensatory services.

Suggested Procedures

Ask to see the package of student plans in a sample of classes having remedial students. Review a random sample of student plans and folders to determine what is included. Talk to teachers to determine who has responsibility for developing student plans and carrying them out. Also try to determine the degree to which student plans are implemented as needed, and the degree to which student plans are adjusted based on a continuing assessment of student needs.

Sources of Information

People

Reading coordinator
Classroom teachers
Supplemental teachers
Students

Materials

Student folders used for recording
student needs, activities and reporting
progress of lesson plans

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. A written plan for each eligible student exists.	
2. Student plans are based on formal diagnostic data.	

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. Student plans include: a. specific areas of need/desired outcomes b. activities targeted at meeting those needs c. a system for evaluating student progress d. a system for reporting progress to students, parents and staff. 4. A staff member has been assigned responsibility for the overall instructional reading program for each student who failed to meet the state standard in reading at the sixth grade level or above.	

Conclusions concerning individual plans for students needing remediation:

Recommendations concerning individual plans for students needing remediation:

Factor: III.B.3. Teachers provide strong leadership in the classroom.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Strong leadership is defined in this factor as the teacher's ability to:

- a. effectively manage classroom organization and instruction
- b. establish a positive and business-like environment
- c. determine the foci of instructional activities and apply appropriate principles of learning.

Reviewers are asked to identify evidence of these characteristics in the classroom. (Note: The team member is asked to ensure that every teacher involved in basic skills instruction is visited and/or interviewed during the team's stay in the school. To observe all basic skills teachers, the team member may want to ask other team members to assist in making observations.

Suggested Procedures

Classroom observations and interviews form the basis of information on this factor. It is important that the team members share their perceptions and establish inter-observer consistency before making generalized statements.

Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Principal
Reading supervisor

Materials

Job description
Basic skills
supplemental instruction plans

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Teachers effectively manage tasks and interactions in the classroom.
2. Teachers group students for instruction based on clearly identified criteria (i.e., skill attainment, interests, learning style).

470

72

471

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. Teachers adequately supervise seat work. 4. Teachers use positive reinforcement to motivate students. 5. The climate in the classroom is positive and supportive of the educational process. 6. Teachers rather than students determine what is to be taught, the most appropriate way instruction should be carried out for each and student and when student instructional plans should be modified.	

Conclusions concerning teacher leadership in the classroom:

Recommendations concerning teacher leadership in the classroom:

MATHEMATICS BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM
(PART IV OF VI)

IV. Basic Skills Program

Mathematics

Much research has been done concerning instruction in the basic skills. What emerges is a consistent pattern of findings that supports curriculum which include the following interrelated elements:

1. Expected outcomes - Sequenced skill arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels.
2. Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
3. Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he/she has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
4. Record keeping system - The student record keeping format is based on the concept of continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. The system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school within the district where there is high mobility of students. (Cooley and Leinhardt, 1975; Harris and Serwer, 1966; Pidgeon, 1970; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Education Programs that Work, USOE, 1978; Brophy and Evertson 1974; Tikunoff, Berlinger and Rist, 1975; Bond and Dyskstra, 1967; Michigan Department of Education, 1976; Edmonds, 1978; Bloom, 1980.)

Many programs incorporate these elements. Some of the most common labels include aligned curriculum, Right-to-Read, diagnostic/prescriptive, mastery learning, structured and continuous progress. There are hundreds of specific programs with these characteristics which research has shown to be effective. The major characteristic of these programs is the concept of taking the individual student through a sequenced set of learning outcomes at a rate consistent with his/her ability. The assumption is made that the student learns a higher level skill following mastery of a lower skill. This approach differs from grade level oriented programs which focus on the skills expected to be learned by the average student in a given grade.

Essential to the successful implementation of the curriculum component are the coordination and integration of instruction in basic skills both horizontally and vertically. The management design must draw together all personnel, materials and services (regardless of funding sources) in a uniform basic skills effort across all grade levels. The management design focuses on a developmental program aimed at reducing the need for remediation. Remediation services (Title I, State Compensatory Education, volunteer services, child study

teams, etc.) are closely coordinated with the developmental program. The classroom teacher is the manager of the child's program. All structural elements of the district's organization and all curricular components of the instructional program are centered on the primacy of the classroom teacher's role (Brinson, 1980).

The aligned curriculum approach does not require one-to-one instruction; however, it does require individualized planning and record keeping. Students may still be taught in groups, but frequent assessment of progress is used to regroup students based on current needs. The most effective grouping has the leader working with small groups of three to seven or large groups of eight or more in some situations. Children working alone or with one or two other children and the teacher is negatively correlated with achievement (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974; Soar, 1973).

The behavior exhibited by teachers forms the group rules by which instruction and interaction occur in the classroom. Research concludes that effective teachers provide strong leadership by directing activities in a business-like way, as they manage the tasks and interactions of the classroom (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974; Soar 1973; Solomon and Kendall 1976). High achievement is more likely when teachers select the focus of the activities and apply appropriate principles of learning.

Achievement is lower in classes having a large amount of unsupervised seat work (Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Soar, 1973; and Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974). Moreover, effective teachers occupy the central role in the classroom and organize learning around questions which they pose. Inherent in management techniques of these teachers is the ability to maintain an intermediate position with respect to classroom control. Effective management in program improvement uses varied methods of control as opposed to a self-defeating management style based purely on criticism and rigidity (Soar, 1977). A well-managed classroom is one in which conditions for constructive rather than disruptive, deviate behavior prevail (Soar, 1973; McDonald and Elias, 1976; Brophy and Evertson, 1974; Bemis and Luft, 1970; Coker, Lorentz and Coker, 1976).

Another subject of study has been compensatory programs in basic skills. Schools have the option of serving the remedial needs of students in the regular classroom or in separate classes. In the regular classroom, the student to adult ratio is reduced, usually by adding a remedial teacher or aide for part of the day. However, some schools schedule those students, not needing remediation, for other activities during the school day, leaving the regular classroom teacher with fewer students for remediation.

The other option for remediation is the use of "pull-out." Students in need of remediation are sent to separate remedial classes for part of the day. Research has shown that "pull-out" as a method of remediation results in the negative labeling of many students. Teachers view these students as less capable and, consequently, lower their expectations for them. Lower teacher expectations, therefore, result in lower levels of student achievement. Another problem with "pull-out" is the frequent lack of coordination of teaching strategies, between the teacher and the special teacher, for the child's basic skills improvement plan. This results, then, in the student spending less time on tasks designed to correct basic skills deficiencies. Further, there is a consistent negative relationship between the time pupils spend in "pull-out" classes and reading and mathematics achievement (Glass and Smith, 1977).

Basic Skills Program Mathematics

Summary of Variables

A. The Developmental Instructional Program

The planned and classroom implemented curriculum includes the following aligned and interrelated elements:

- . Expected outcomes - Sequenced skill arrays precisely define the basic skills instruction across all grade levels and are related to the standardized tests used in the district.
- . Materials/Instruction - School and classroom instructional materials, texts, strategies and activities are directly referenced to the identified sequenced skills.
- . Assessment - There are criterion referenced assessment procedures for each skill. Assessment is adequate and timely to distinguish the skills a child has already mastered from those he has yet to learn. Assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- . Record-keeping system The student record-keeping format is based on the concept of the continuous student progress and is not limited to grade level. Within a district where there is high mobility of students, the system allows a student to move without instructional interruption from grade to grade and from school to school.

B. Compensatory Reading:

- . Supports the developmental program.
- . If remediation takes place through "pull-out", the negative effects are minimized.
- . If remediation takes place in the classroom, provision is made for adequate services for all students need remediation.

C. Instructional management includes:

- . classroom teacher-managed instruction
- . strong direct leadership by teachers
- . flexible grouping of students based on assessed learner needs
- . positive methods of control
- . in-class compensatory education
- . lack of classroom disruption

IV.A. DEVELOPMENTAL MATHEMATICS

Factor: IV.A.1. Teachers have and use clearly defined and sequenced outcomes of instruction such as a skills array or objectives.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Factors A.1-A.5 in this section are highly interrelated. It is essential that there be congruence between the objectives of learning, instruction, assessment and record keeping. Determining clearly what is to be learned is the first step in this sequence. The team member is asked to determine whether or not the school has formally defined expected outcomes and the degree to which they are used by the classroom teachers in directing instruction.

Suggested Procedures

Determine whether or not a skills array/objectives has been adopted for the mathematics program and secure copies for your review. Determine what level of involvement mathematics staff had in the selection or development of the skills array/objectives. Through interviews and classroom observations determine whether the skills array/objectives are used to guide instruction.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Principal
Mathematics coordinator
Teacher
Mathematics department chairperson

Materials

Curriculum guides
Skills array/objectives
Lesson plans

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. There is a skills array in mathematics which actually guides instruction across all grades.	
2. The mathematics teachers and specialists support the skills array as what should be taught.	

Indicators

Comments/Findings

3. Mathematics teachers and specialists base mathematics instruction on the same skills array.
4. If there is a high degree of student mobility between schools in the district, there is one mathematics skills array used to guide mathematics instruction in all schools.
5. The skills array in use is appropriate for high school age students.
6. The skills array has been analyzed and appropriate skills are reinforced in all courses enrolling students who are deficient in basic skills.

Conclusions concerning existence and use of skills array/objectives:

Recommendations concerning existence and use of skills array/objectives:

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Factor: IV.A.2. Classroom instructional materials, teaching strategies and student activities in mathematics are directly referenced to the skills array in all classrooms and are sufficient in quantity and variety to respond to the learning needs of all children.

Consideration in Reviewing this Factor

This factor asks first whether the instructional materials and activities have been directly coded or referenced to the skills array; second, whether the related materials and activities are used in actual classroom practice and, finally, the degree to which the materials and instructional activities give all children a chance to successfully learn essential mathematics skills.

Suggested Procedures

The focus of this section is to determine whether the material and instructional activities are matched to the learning outcomes as defined and assessed. Most teachers rely heavily on the textbook series and supplement it with other activities and material. However, many schools also have a curriculum guide which describes the approved program. The team member needs to look at what is supposed to be the "official" curriculum and what is actually the "in use" curriculum, and the degree to which it reflects the skills array/objectives.

The team member should determine if the skills array/objectives are used as a criteria for selecting new textbooks or materials.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Mathematics teachers
Mathematics department chairperson

Material

Curriculum guides
Textbooks
Supplemental materials

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Instructional materials have been analyzed and correlated to the skills array in a manner which facilitates their use by teachers and identifies mismatches or omissions in skill development.

Indicators	Comments/Findings
2. There are adequate supplementary materials to support instruction in specific skills, particularly those skills identified as in need of improvement.	
3. The materials are geared to the ability levels of the students, appropriate for the interests and age levels of the students and responsive to special learning needs (such as students with limited English proficiency).	
4. Mathematics skills are incorporated in other subject areas.	
5. The need of students of limited English proficiency or with another native language has been considered in selecting textbooks for all courses.	
6. Districts with a high degree of student mobility between schools coordinate the curriculum across all schools.	
7. The school curriculum is coordinated with sending and receiving schools in the district.	
8. If mathematics instruction takes place for some students in vocational schools the instruction is coordinated with the sending school's basic skills program.	

Indicators

Comments/Findings

- | | |
|--|--|
| 8. The remedial services are part of the overall mathematics curriculum of the school. | |
|--|--|

Conclusions concerning instructional materials and procedures:

Recommendations concerning instructional materials and procedures:

489

Factor: IV.A.3. There is a classroom record keeping and reporting system which tracks the progress of of students based on the defined learning outcomes in mathematics across all grade levels and allows for frequent feedback to the students, parents and teacher on the progress of students at all grade levels.

Considerations in Reviewing This Factor

The reviewer is asked to determine whether:

- a. the record keeping system reflects the skills array/objectives
- b. the teachers use the recorded information for instructional and program management purposes, and
- c. the reporting system ensures students know the objectives of the mathematics program and the student's progress toward achieving them.

Suggested Procedures

Request samples of the record keeping and reporting materials used in the district and school. Determine if there is a correlation between the school skills array, the skills assessed, skills recorded and reported and textbook used for instruction. There should be consistency within and across grade levels. Skills need to be identified in some way as having been introduced, mastered and reinforced.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Supervisor(s)
Principal
Resource staff
Teachers
Mathematics department chairperson

Materials

Student record cards
Individual teacher records
Skills arrays
Curriculum guides

Indicators	Comments/Findings
1. The school's skills array is used as the basis of a standardized record keeping system which tracks the progress of students in the classroom and across grade levels. 2. When the district has high student mobility between schools, there is a standard record keeping system district-wide which allows for tracking of student progress between schools. 3. When part of the basic skills instruction takes place in a vocational school, records are regularly shared between schools.	

Conclusions concerning student record keeping:

Recommendations concerning student record keeping:

Factor: IV.A.4. Assessment procedures used in the school for assessing specific achievements and needs of students in mathematics are based on the skills array and the actual material covered in the classrooms.

Considerations in Reviewing This Factor

The team member is asked to confirm that the assessment instrument and procedures are based on the skills array and classroom instruction. This requires looking at the total student evaluation design including such things as teacher-made tests, district/school standardized testing, MBS test usage and any other sources used by teachers to measure pupils' progress.

Suggested Procedures

Make a determination, through interviews with central and school staff assigned to the MBS test administration and/or locally selected test administration, as to what efforts were made to analyze the tests and other indicators of pupil progress to determine their validity as measures of the instructional program. Find out if an individual or group has been assigned responsibility for analyzing and communicating the findings regarding the alignment of instruction and assessment. Where possible, take a random sample of objectives and ask staff to demonstrate how they assess these items.

Sources of Information

People

Central staff
Principals
Teachers

Materials

MBS test printouts
Report of MBS test results to board of education
Agenda for staff meeting on MBS tests results
Report of locally selected test results

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Staff formally matched pupil progress assessment procedures to the skills array/objectives including:
 - a. MBS test items
 - b. the school standardized testing program items

490

491

Indicators

Comments/Findings

- c. teacher-made tests
- d. means of assessment used by staff other than tests to measure pupil progress on the skills array.
- 2. The MBS test has been analyzed to determine which skills on the district's skills array have been mastered and which need additional emphasis.
- 3. The results of the MBS tests, the district's standardized tests and other tests have been analyzed to determine skill mastery level for all students, including those of limited English proficiency.
- 4. Teachers use the results of student assessment to plan instruction.
- 5. Standardized assessment instruments have been analyzed to determine if the material covered on the tests is being taught at the appropriate time in the classrooms.
- 6. Reports of the results of the MBS test and the school's standardized testing program reflecting individual and group data are distributed to all staff for instructional and program planning purposes.
- 7. Classroom assessment results are used to guide instruction.
- 8. Students are grouped for instruction based on current identified needs.
- 9. Parents and students know the objectives of the program and the individual student's mastery level.

Conclusions concerning the record keeping system:

Recommendations concerning the record keeping system:

IV.B. MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL AND COMPENSATORY MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTION

Factor: IV.B.1. There is a written plan which guides basic skills instruction.

Considerations for Reviewing This Factor

The district plan for basic skills instruction should be a written plan which includes, but is not necessarily limited to: a) a definition of a developmental program, b) a definition of compensatory services, c) a projection of staff development activities for the year based on identified needs, d) program improvement objectives and, e) clearly defined lines of responsibility. The team member is asked to determine the plan's existence and the degree to which it has been implemented.

Suggested Procedures

Identify and secure a copy of the written plan for mathematics instruction and review it to determine the degree to which it provides a clear definition of a coordinated program, roles and responsibilities of administrative, supervisory and instructional staff, and the identification of program and staff improvement activities. Observe classrooms and review lesson plans, inservice agenda, and basic skills improvement activities to determine the degree to which the plan is being implemented. This information can be collected at the same time information is collected for IV A.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Mathematics coordinators
Principals
Students
Mathematics department chairperson

Materials

Basic skills plan
Lesson plans
Inservice agenda
Basic skills committee agenda
Minutes from staff meetings such as T & E,
department or grade level meetings

1. There is a written basic skills plan.
2. The plan is being implemented by the staff.
3. The plan has a management design which draws together all personnel, materials and services (regardless of funding sources) in a uniform basic skills effort across all grade levels.
4. The principal is assigned the overall responsibility for the basic skills instruction in the school.
5. The structured elements of the district's organization and all curricular components of the instructional program center on the primacy of the classroom teacher's role.
6. There are clear lines of responsibility concerning basic skills instruction in the school and in the district.
7. Improvement objectives for mathematics instruction have been established and communicated to staff, students and parents and focus on such improvements as:
 - a. reducing the number of students needing compensatory services
 - b. ameliorating identified program weaknesses
 - c. emphasizing/reinforcing the specific skills with which many students have difficulty.
 - d. including the interim objectives resulting from MBS testing and T&E basic skills planning.
8. Staff development activities are targeted at identified needs and are perceived by staff as responsive to those needs.

Indicators

Comments/Findings

9. Students of limited English proficiency in need of compensatory education are served in programs where their individual needs are addressed.
10. The negative labeling of students requiring remediation is avoided by other students, teachers and administrators.
11. All students needing remedial instruction are receiving such instruction.
12. The classroom teacher is actively involved in the identification of students who need remediation.
13. During the remedial instruction the adult to student ratio:
 - a. allows for remediation of specific learning deficiencies.
 - b. ameliorating identified program weaknesses
14. The classroom teacher actively participates in school/district decisions about what will be taught, how the program will operate and how the program may be improved.
15. Students are given academic credit for achievement in basic skills courses.
16. If remedial mathematics teachers are used they are active members of the Mathematics department.
17. Remedial courses have equal priority with other courses in scheduling and space allocations.
18. Participation in remedial courses does not preclude participation in special interest courses (i.e., vocational arts).

UL 497

Indicators	Comments/Findings
19. Counselors advise students on appropriate courses to take in basic skills.	

Conclusions concerning the basic skills plan:

Recommendations concerning the basic skills plan:

Factor: IV.B.2. There are individual instructional plans for each student who achieves below the state standard in mathematics at the sixth grade level or above.

Consideration for Reviewing this Factor

The team member is asked to a) confirm the existence of individual instructional plans for students requiring remediation and, b) determine whether the plan provides instructional direction for the developmental program and compensatory services.

Suggested Procedures

Ask to see the package of student plans in a sample of classes having remedial students. Review a random sample of student plans and folders to determine what is included. Talk to teachers to determine who has responsibility for developing student plans and carrying them out. Also try to determine the degree to which student plans are implemented as needed, and the degree to which student plans are adjusted based on a continuing assessment of student needs.

Sources of Information

People

Mathematics coordinator
Classroom teachers
Supplemental teachers
Students

Materials

Student folders used for recording
student needs, activities and reporting
progress of lesson plans

Indicators

1. A written plan for each eligible student exists.
2. Student plans are based on formal diagnostic data.

Comments/Findings

500

Indicators

Comments/Findings

3. Student plans include:

- a. specific areas of need/desired outcomes
- b. activities targeted at meeting those needs
- c. a system for evaluating student progress
- d. a system for reporting progress to students, parents and staff.

4. A staff member has been assigned responsibility for the overall instructional mathematics program for each student who failed to meet the state standard in mathematics at the sixth grade level or above.

Conclusions concerning individual plans for students needing remediation:

Recommendations concerning individual plans for students needing remediation:

501

Factor: IV.B.3. Teachers provide strong leadership in the classroom.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

Strong leadership is defined in this factor as the teacher's ability to:

- a. effectively manage classroom organization and instruction
- b. establish a positive and business-like environment
- c. determine the foci of instructional activities and apply appropriate principles of learning.

Reviewers are asked to identify evidence of these characteristics in the classroom. (Note: The team member is asked to ensure that every teacher involved in basic skills instruction is visited and/or interviewed during the team's stay in the school. To observe all basic skills teachers, the team member may want to ask other team members to assist in making observations.

Suggested Procedures

Classroom observations and interviews form the basis of information on this factor. It is important that the team members share their perceptions and establish inter-observer consistency before making generalized statements.

Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Principal
Mathematics supervisor

Materials

Job description
Basic skills
supplemental instruction plans

Indicators

1. Teachers effectively manage tasks and interactions in the classroom.
2. Teachers group students for instruction based on clearly identified criteria (i.e., skill attainment, interests, learning style).

Comments/Findings

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. Teachers adequately supervise seat work. 4. Teachers use positive reinforcement to motivate students. 5. The climate in the classroom is positive and supportive of the educational process. 6. Teachers rather than students determine what is to be taught, the most appropriate way instruction should be carried out for each student and when student instructional plans should be modified.	

Conclusions concerning teacher leadership in the classroom:

Recommendations concerning teacher leadership in the classroom:

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME
(PART V OF VI)

505

V. Instructional Time

Most educators would agree that children who spend more time in learning-related activities tend to learn more. However, time is often not treated as a resource that can be manipulated to improve student learning, as educators tend to think of time as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for learning. That is, they generally feel that it is not only the quantity but also the quality of time spent in a learning situation that determines a student's progress.

Recent research has begun to focus attention on both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the time concept. So, the literature in this area is beginning to offer guidance to schools not only about the importance of how much time is made available for student learning, but also about more effective ways to use time (LeCompte, 1979). The pervasive influence of time on student achievement is developed in a model of "Individual Instructional Exposure and Achievement" (Wiley and Harnischfeger, 1974). For example, the overall importance of time-to-learn has been repeatedly emphasized by Bloom (1980) and Carroll (1963). Also, a number of studies have shown significant correlations between student learning and the following variables: a longer school day (Bond and Dykstra, 1967), number of days of student and teacher absence (Rosenshine, 1971), average number of hours of schooling (Wiley and Harnischfeger, 1974), amount of time spent on academic activities (Stallings and Kaskowitz, 1974), and student engaged time (Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study, 1978). Moreover, the importance of active engagement on the part of both teachers and students in the instructional process is often emphasized.

The Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study or BTES study (Phase III, 1978) developed a model of instructional processes which focused on reading and mathematics instruction at the elementary school level. This classroom model acknowledges the common sense view that, for a given student, certain instructional processes lead to student classroom learning which is then reflected in achievement test scores. An analysis of the research suggests that improved student learning results from increasing the amount of time in a school day, or from assigning more time to instruction in a particular subject area. However, the most important consideration might be to take steps to ensure that teachers spend more time on instruction-related activities. Teacher time-on-task may be increased by achieving better classroom control, or improved organization of instruction, or by more effective use of instruction materials. In this sense, time may be a concept that cuts across many of the variables to be considered in the school effectiveness research.

Instructional Time

Summary of Variables

- A. Time in Basic Skills Instruction - The school allocates sufficient instructional time to the teaching of reading and math and, when necessary, increases this time to provide for additional instruction. Student and teacher attendance provides for maximum basic skills instruction.
- B. Classroom Instructional Time - Teachers use the time allocated to the teaching of reading and math by applying effective strategies for organizing and managing the learning environment.
- C. Student Engaged Time - In reading and math instruction, students spend a high proportion of their time engaged in academic work.

V.A.

ATTENDANCE OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

Factor: V.A.1. Students have a high record of attendance.

Considerations for Reviewing this Factor

Student absenteeism can significantly reduce the students' opportunity to learn. It is difficult to determine exactly when absenteeism can be classified as a problem for a school; however, the following figures are provided as a guide for reviewers:

Data Collection Year	National Average Daily Attendance	New Jersey Average Daily Attendance
1977-78	92.0%	90.6%

(Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics of State School Systems)

Suggested Procedures

Review with the principal or attendance officer the absentee rate for the past two or three years. Discuss absenteeism with teachers to determine if they think absenteeism is a problem. If there appears to be a problem, the reviewer may want to discuss reasons for low attendance with parents and students. Review current procedures for dealing with absenteeism.

Sources of Information

People

Principal
Attendance officers
Teachers
Parents
Students
Counselors

Materials

Attendance records
Attendance policies and procedures

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. The average daily attendance of students in the school is at or above 90%.
2. Staff communicates to students the importance of good attendance.
3. Students perceive administration and teachers as encouraging and requiring good student attendance records.
4. If student attendance is a problem, staff has analyzed the cause(s) of that problem and have developed a plan to improve attendance.
5. There are rules and regulations that clearly set out responsibilities and penalties for absence from class and school.
6. The average attendance in basic skills classes is at or above 90%.
7. Students and parents are knowledgeable of the rules and regulations concerning attendance.
8. Teachers have a specific role in the prevention of student absenteeism and cutting.
9. Policies on cutting and absenteeism do not result in additional time away from basic skills instruction.
10. The dropoff rate is not greater than 10%.
(Drop off is the difference between freshman and senior classes taking into consideration transfers to special schools and district stability of enrollment.)
11. There are alternative programs for students who cannot benefit from the standard program.

512

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

12. The school provides vocational training for all students who want it.
13. Counselors encourage students to complete their schooling.

Conclusions concerning attendance:

Recommendations concerning attendance:

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Factor: V.A.2. Teachers have a high record of attendance.

Considerations for Reviewing this Factor

Teacher absenteeism reduces the students' opportunity to learn. If qualified substitutes are available and teachers provide adequate lesson plans, the negative effects of the teacher's absence can be reduced. A high level of teacher absenteeism is frequently associated with dissatisfaction with the school environment. Although it is difficult to define "high level of absenteeism" the State Department of Education has been encouraging schools with an average teacher attendance rate below 96% to consider procedures for improving attendance.

Suggested Procedures

Review attendance and substitute policies and procedures with the superintendent and the principal. If teacher attendance appears to be a factor in student achievement discuss attendance with teachers and administrators.

Sources of Information

People

Superintendent
Principal
Teachers
Substitutes

Materials

Attendance records
Attendance policies and procedures
Salary guides for substitutes
Procedures for substitutes

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Teacher attendance is at or above 96%.
2. Where staff absenteeism is a problem, there is a plan to improve attendance.
3. Qualified substitutes provide instruction when teachers are absent.
4. Teachers provide adequate guidance/lesson plans for substitutes.

514

515

Indicators	Comments/Findings
5. The school provides training and information to guide new substitutes. 6. When substitutes are not available and classes have to be combined, basic skills instruction is not interrupted. 7. Teacher release time (i.e., inservice, ad hoc assignments, committee work, etc.) does not significantly interfere with basic skills instructional time.	

Conclusions concerning the attendance of staff and students as it relates to basic skills instruction:

Recommendations concerning the attendance of staff and students as it relates to basic skills instruction:

516

517

V.B.

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Factor: V.B. Adequate time is devoted to basic skills instruction to allow for a comprehensive developmental program and to remediate student deficiencies.

Considerations for Reviewing this Factor

The team member is asked to determine the adequacy of time devoted to basic skills instruction as well as the degree to which the class size and classroom organization provide each student with the kind of instructional time which meets his/her learning needs.

Suggested Procedures

Classroom observations and a review of instructional schedules for both the developmental and compensatory programs (including "pull-out" instruction) represent prime sources of information. It may also be helpful to determine through staff and student interviews if they believe scheduled basic skills instructional time is adequate.

Sources of Information

People

Teachers
Students
Basic skills supervisory staff

Materials

Class schedules
Lesson plans

Indicators

1. Adequate time is provided for remediation of deficiencies in reading for all students needing assistance.

Comments/Findings

519

518

Indicators	Comments/Finding
2. Adequate time is provided for remediation of deficiencies in mathematics for all students needing assistance. 3. Teacher-instructional time is increased through the use of aides or volunteers for non-instructional tasks. 4. The adult to student ratio in basic skills classes allows for small group instruction. 5. The adult to student ratio allows for adequate individual instructional management (i.e., up-to-date student records of skills achievement). 6. Teachers provide additional time in basic skills instruction for students who need it. 7. If the home environment of most students is not conducive to completing homework assignments, time is provided in school to complete assignments.	

Conclusions concerning classroom instructional time:

Recommendations concerning classroom instructional time:

521

106

V.C.

STUDENT ENGAGED TIME

Factor: V.C.1. Students are engaged in constructive classroom activities for most of the time which is scheduled for basic skills classroom instruction.

Considerations for Reviewing this Factor

This factor asks the team member to determine the degree to which the student is involved in learning activities. The team member should be concerned with the individual student's time-on-task, the total number of students in the classroom, the productivity involved in the instructional process and the time spent focusing on the objective of the lesson.

Suggested Procedures

This factor focuses on what is actually happening -- not on what is planned. While observing classroom instruction it may be helpful to audit time on task by exception (i.e., note amounts of time and numbers of students not engaged in the learning activities assigned to them). Note: Time spent in organizing the class or giving instructions is not considered instructional time. Asking students how much time they spend on math/reading each day may be used to supplement classroom observations.

Suggested ResourcesPeople

Teachers
Students

Materials

Student work

IndicatorsComments/Findings

1. In general, at least 75% of the students are alert and participating in:
 - a. reading instruction
 - b. mathematics instruction

Indicators**Comments/Findings**

2. Student achievement in basic skills is not influenced by any of the following:
 - a. drug/alcohol abuse
 - b. violence in the school
 - c. absenteeism
 - d. poor nutrition
 - e. class cutting
 - f. suspension
 - g. unidentified handicaps
 - h. student mobility
 - i. pregnancy
 - j. runaways
3. If learning is negatively affected by any of the above, the school has developed and implemented a plan to reduce the effect of the problem.
4. Teacher requests for child study team reviews are honored and such reviews are conducted according to state guidelines.
5. The needs of limited English proficient students are taken into account when class homework activities are planned and assigned.
6. Students are sufficiently proficient in English to benefit from lessons presented in English.

Coacclusions concerning constructive involvement in class activities:

Recommendations concerning constructive involvement in class activities:

525

Factor: V.C.2. Disruption of classroom instruction in basic skills is minimal.

Consideration for Reviewing this Factor

Disruption of classroom instructional time falls into two major categories: 1) interruptions imposed from people/activities outside the classroom and 2) interruption of instruction resulting from discipline/behavior problems, and/or inefficient classroom organization.

Suggested Procedures

When reviewing this factor, try to identify specific causes of interruption which reduce scheduled instructional time. Some interruptions are planned, such as assemblies, announcements, etc. Review weekly school schedules, activity bulletin boards, etc. to determine how much time is pre-empted by other activities. Interview staff and students to determine what kind and what amount of scheduled instructional time is lost and to determine whether they believe this has a detrimental effect on the instructional process. When observing classes to collect program information, it may be helpful to tally or note specific disruptions to profile the use of class time.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Teaching staff (regular classroom and supplemental)
Principal/vice principal
Students

Materials

Assembly and inservice schedules
Weekly calendars
Lesson plan books
Special activity bulletins and/or weekly memo to staff
Committee and ad hoc staff assignments which occur during the school day

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. In general, no more than five minutes of basic skills instructional time in a class is lost as a result of announcements, hall noise, etc. per period.
2. In general, no more than five minutes of basic skills instructional time in class is lost due to student disruption, discipline and/or classroom organizational activities per period.

Indicators	Comments/Findings
3. Teachers and students believe there are very few interruptions in basic skills instruction. 4. When disruptions in basic skills instruction occur, the staff finds ways to make up that time.	

Conclusions regarding teachers' use of time in organizing and managing reading and mathematics instruction:

Recommendations regarding teachers' use of time in organizing and managing reading and mathematics instruction:

528

529

PARENT/COMMUNITY RELATIONS
(PART VI OF VI)

530

VI. Parent and Community Relations

"The family is the central, most important long lasting learning institution a child experiences" (Gordon, 1979). Research justifies this statement by indicating that parental involvement in the educational process can greatly enhance a child's prospects for academic success (Bronfenbrenner, 1978; Bloom, 1980; Clark, Lotto and McCarthy, 1980). According to Gordon (1979), parents can interact with the educational system as (1) teachers of their own children, (2) adult learners of new skills, (3) volunteers in the classroom, (4) paid para-professionals, and (5) decision-makers and policy advisors.

When the parent acts as tutor in the home, research indicates that benefits accrue to all the children in the home as well as to the parent-tutor (Olmsted, 1976; Gordon, 1979). Home tutoring positively affects a child's language development, his/her general aptitude for learning and his/her motivation to learn in school (Bloom, 1980; Bronfenbrenner, 1978). Further, when parents are involved as teachers of their own children a number of possible benefits occur, including increased parent/child transaction, increased home/school understanding, and conceivable cost benefits to the overall institutional effort (Harrison & Wilkenson, 1978; Gordon, 1979; Rich Van Dien and Mattox, 1979).

Research indicates that when the parent works as a para-professional or classroom volunteer they gain a sense of self-sufficiency and self-confidence. These roles have included professional training and often allowed opportunities for advancement. Para-professional and volunteer work also impact on the system, affecting the school in terms of manpower, public relations, policy alignment and general family services (medical and such) (True, 1979; Gordon, 1979).

For the role of the parent as a decision-maker to function optimally, schools and administrators must be cognizant of the social, political, economic and educational factors concerning the parent body (True, 1979). Parents as decision-makers can function on three levels: (1) the individual level (choice of school, teachers, etc.), (2) school level (e.g., PTA involvement), and (3) community level (as board member, citizen advisory or parent advocate), (Davies, Burges, Hirsch, Hirsch, Hugenin, Upton, and Zerchkov, 1979; True, 1979). When parents feel their input and involvement has a meaning, they are more likely to participate in the system.

All programs involving parents and the community ought to be part of a larger school-wide plan. The school should identify parent/community goals, as well as identify strategies for enlisting parents and mobilizing the resources of the home. In successful parent participation programs, roles are clearly identified and the school has devised methods of evaluation (Davies, et al. 1979; Hugenin, 1979).

Because parent and community involvement essentially can impact heavily on the total educational scheme, it is incumbent on schools to encourage and to facilitate this interaction. Rich & et al. 1979 and Rutter, 1979 have identified some means by which principals and teachers can involve parents. They can:

- Raise consciousness about the home and community as the key to student achievement and publicize and support ideas, materials and strategies that promote this belief.

- . Encourage student, parent, and teacher projects in the community.
- . Recognize that parents are a significant force in their child's education. Search for ways to involve parents as educational partners.
- . Show parents in a variety of ways that you care for them and their children. Inform parents regularly of what is happening in school on a regular basis. Offer a variety of school-parent programs and materials designed to build the home/school/community educational partnership.
- . Encourage parents to visit the school, confer with school staff regularly and to use the school as a source for help and referral to community agencies.
- . Teach parents how they can help their children at home. Provide home learning tips on how to supplement the work of the school.
- . Utilize effectively the contribution of parents' skills, insights, talents and concerns to the educational process.
- . Use the resources of the home for materials, ideas and as resources for different subject areas.
- . Adapt successful program practices from the preschool and elementary levels to the needs of older students and their families.
- . Set up a functional design for operating a parent advisory council at the school. Combine specific tasks and advisory functions as a focus for positive parental efforts.

Essentially, the efforts of teachers and administrators should be directed at reducing the divergency between parents and educators. When the home and the school have congruent learning emphases, the child has little difficulty in his later school learning (Bloom, 1980), and the child's attitudes and achievement level are likely to be enhanced.

Citizens and educators are recognizing that improvement in the schools and community support for education occurs only when schools and communities are open to each other: when the educational consumer (student, parent and community member) has a strong, honest part in setting policy and making decisions (National Institute of Education, 1978; Office of Education, 1979; Davies, 1976).

533 Above all, parents want safe schools. The most recent Gallup Polls on public attitudes toward education ranked discipline as the number one concern of parents. The use of alcohol and drug has continued, for the past decade, to assume a priority in the public's concern about public schools. Crime and vandalism, in the latest survey, received sufficient mentions to place it among the top 10 major problems (Elam, 1978).

Research indicates that where violence levels are high, teaching and learning are negatively affected by a school climate that is dominated by fear (National Institute of Education, 1978).

The Safe School Study Report cited community-school relations as a factor in the incidence of school crime and misbehavior. Schools having good relationships with the surrounding communities tend to have less of a problem. The more support a school receives from parents, community agencies, policy, the board of education and other sources, the safer the school will be (National Institute of Education, 1978).

Progress in education is more likely to occur within the context of collaborative partnership involving the home, school, community and municipality (National Institute of Education, 1978; U.S. Office of Education, 1979).

535

536

Parent and Community Relations

Summary of Variables

- A. Parent and Community Relations and the Basic Skills Program - The school communicates with parents and community members about the basic skills program (e.g., student expectations, content of instruction, evaluation, reporting system) and also encourages parents to communicate with the school and become involved with the instructional program.
- B. Parent and Community Relations and the Non-Instructional Processes - The administration and teachers communicate with the parents and community regarding school policies and practices, and they encourage active participation of parents for the purpose of providing a safe, pleasant and effective learning environment.

VI.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Factor: VI.A. The school communicates with parents and community members about the basic skills program (e.g., student expectations, content of instruction, evaluation, reporting system) and encourages parents to communicate with the school and become involved in their children's basic skills program.

Considerations in Reviewing This Factor

Given the family as a major learning force in a child's experience, this factor focuses the team member's attention on the degree to which parents know about and participate in the school's basic skills program, so that a "partnership" between the school and the home can serve as a motivating, supportive and reinforcing system to the child's basic skills education. The team member needs to find out if the administration and staff believe a partnership with parents and community is important and, if so, what specific efforts are made by the school to develop and sustain that partnership.

Suggested Procedures

Data collection related to this factor is basically a two step process: First, to determine what the school and its staff says and perceives about what they do to encourage the parent/community partnership, and second, to find out the degree to which representatives of the parents and community confirm those efforts, indicate a positive relationship with the school, and support the basic skills program.

The reviewer is strongly urged to define the parent and community population, identify the major ethnic and racial groups and identify the official and unofficial spokespersons of the community prior to the actual visit so that the team member can plan his/her activities well in advance of the visit to the school. It may take the school some time to arrange for specific interviews. A fairly large segment of time should be set aside to talk with parents and community members in "their territory" (i.e., community center, local store, housing project, local chapter). It is important that a cross section of parents and community members be interviewed.

Sources of Information

People

Board members
Community organization leaders
Informal community leaders
Sample of parents (including non-
English speaking, if this a major group)
PTA members
Church leaders
School aides/volunteers
Principal
Teachers
Social workers

Materials

Policies
Written procedures for communicating with parents
Sample communications with parents (e.g., report
cards, newsletters, etc.)
Records of parent conferences

Indicators

1. The school has clear procedures for parent involvement which are known to staff, parents and students.
2. The school has a clear set of objectives for parent participation.
3. Classroom teachers communicate directly with parents concerning the basic skills program and the role parents can play in supporting the program.

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Comments/Findings

542



Indicators	Comments/Findings
4. Communication (both verbal and written) with parents is in the language of the parents.	
5. Parents are supportive of the basic skills program and believe that it is meeting the needs of their children.	
6. Parents feel comfortable in initiating contact with the school and individual staff members.	

543

Conclusions concerning the role of parents and community members in supporting the basic skills program.

Recommendations concerning the role of parents and community members in supporting the basic skills program:

545

544

VI.B. PARENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND THE NON-INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESSES

Factor: VI.B. Parents and other community members are actively supportive of the school program, policies and procedures.

Considerations in Reviewing this Factor

"Actively supportive" is defined here as parents and community members:

- a. responding positively when asked whether the school is doing a good job with its children
- b. participating (in large numbers) in school activities
- c. being strongly involved in school related organizations.
- d. volunteering services, talents and skills to support the school
- e. indicating the school is a safe environment, fair in its treatment of all students and correct in the expectation it has for student behavior and discipline
- f. supporting budget items related to the instructional program of their children
- g. participating in goal setting and school problem solving activities with staff

Suggested Procedures

Similar to the previous factor, the team member needs to determine what kind of support the school has from parents and the community through interviews with administration, supervisory staff, teachers, and aides/volunteers. Next, the team member will need to test the school staff's perceptions by interviewing a representative sample of parents and community members. The same schedule of interviews can serve both factors in this section.

Suggested Sources of Information

People

Staff, including teachers, administrators
secretaries, custodians (especially
those who live in the community)
Board members
Formal and informal community leaders
Parents of public and non-public school
children

Materials

Agenda and minutes of specific meetings
Newspaper articles
Budget votes

Indicators

Comments/Findings

1. Parents, including those who are non-English speaking, understand the school's expectations regarding the behavior of children toward their classmates and faculty in and out of the classroom and the school.
2. Parents feel comfortable in contacting the school for information or problems concerning their sons and daughters and know how to make the appropriate contact.
3. Parents say the school provides a safe environment for students.
4. Parents agree with the behavioral and academic standards set by the school (i.e., policy on homework, discipline, advancement to higher grades, tests, etc).
5. The school staff contacts parents in a timely manner when a problem arises concerning their children.

Indicators	Comments/Findings
6. Students attending the school represent all abilities and economic levels of the community it serves. 7. The community served by the school has supported the district budget in recent years. 8. Parents and other community members have been active in the T & E process. 9. The school involves parents and the community in finding solutions for such problems as: a. discipline b. violence c. vandalism d. drugs e. absenteeism f. class cutting g. nutrition h. family mobility 10. There is substantial parent participation in school functions (e.g., Title I councils, classroom activities).	

549

Conclusions concerning parent and community member support for the school:

Recommendations concerning parent and community member support for the school:

550

124

PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING REMEDIAL PLANS

Fred G. Burke
Commissioner of Education

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Deputy Commissioner

New Jersey State Department of Education
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Fall, 1980

Development of Remedial Plan

A. Purpose of Remedial Plans

The purpose of the evaluation and classification process is to stimulate appropriate local initiatives to correct any deficiencies that prevent the provision of a thorough and efficient system of education for the children served by the school or district. One method used to ensure the effectiveness of these local efforts is state approval of a remedial plan. The state monitors the implementation and evaluation of these plans and thereby ensures that the deficiencies are addressed.

N.J.A.C. 6:8-6.2(1), (11) defines the conditions under which a remedial plan is required and the responsibility for the development of the plan.

This section states:

A remedial plan shall be requested for a district or a school when the specified criteria have not been met and no effective corrective action has been implemented by the district.

1. The local board of education shall be responsible for developing and implementing such remedial plans;

11. A school or district shall be granted interim approval when a requested remedial plan is approved by the commissioner and implemented by the district.

Identification of significant deficiencies leads to the requirement that a written remedial plan be submitted to the commissioner for approval. If the

plan is approved, the commissioner shall assure its implementation in a timely manner.

A remedial plan, when approved, is an agreement between the district and the commissioner. A remedial plan cites the specific actions to be taken by the district and school, and provides a basis for the department and local citizens to judge the progress being made.

B. General Content of Remedial Plans

According to N.J.A.C. 6:8-7.1(a), remedial plans must include, but need not be limited to:

1. an analysis of the need and its causes,
2. a description and justification for the improvement strategies,
3. interim goals and benchmarks to assess the progress of the remedial plan and a plan for the evaluation of its effectiveness,
4. procedures to ensure public involvement in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the remedial plan,
5. an implementation timeline and schedule and
6. specifics about the fiscal and staff resources to be used to implement the plan.

Each of these six components will be expanded upon in Section C which follows.

C. Development of Remedial Plans

1. Analysis of the need and its causes.

Basic Skills Remedial Plans

The Comprehensive Basic Skills Review report, on file with the Department of Education, provides a description of the need and its causes. The district/school may supplement this analysis with other local assessment data.

Other Remedial Plans

An equivalent to the Basic Skills Comprehensive Review is not available in areas other than basic skills. Therefore, a plan for the areas of the educational plan and law and regulation must incorporate a diagnosis by the district and county office of the need and its causes.

2. Description and justification for improvement strategies.

Basic Skills Remedial Plans - Two Options

Option A

Local district/school staff have been heavily involved in the Comprehensive Basic Skills Review. If the district intends to implement most or all of the recommendations, the district may submit the "Major Recommendations" section of the report to satisfy this plan requirement. If other action is to be substituted for any priority recommendations, additional sheets must be added which detail the actions to be taken. The district may also add a brief description of planned local actions not covered in the report.

Option B

Under Option B, the district chooses to develop an alternative plan which differs significantly from the recommendations of the Comprehensive Basic Skill Review Team. This plan must provide an explanation for the rejection of each of the recommendations in the CBSR report and a justification of the alternative strategies selected. The plan must address the total basic skills

program: developmental, remedial and bilingual. A detailed plan must be submitted for each school which had a CBSR and must address the issues raised in the CBSR instrument. These issues are grouped by the following areas:

- 1) policy and practices in the basic skills and related areas
- 2) organization and training of staff
- 3) management of basic skills instruction
- 4) basic skills curriculum
- 5) time devoted to basic skills instruction and use of that time
- 6) relations with parents and the community.

Other Remedial Plans

Plans for the remediation of deficiencies in the educational plan and law and regulation must provide a detailed description and justification of the improvement activities to be undertaken.

3. Interim goals and benchmarks to assess the progress of the remedial plan and a plan for the evaluation of its effectiveness.

Basic Skills Remedial Plans

The interim goals for the remedial plan should be included in the letter assurances which must accompany the plan. For districts/schools which have used Option A under number two above, the priority list of recommendations will serve as benchmarks. Those districts using Option B must develop a clear set of benchmarks.

A plan for evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan in terms of strategies and outcomes must be included in all basic skills plans.

Other Remedial Plans

The interim goal for the remedial plan should be included in the letter of transmittal which must accompany it. A clear set of benchmarks must be included in the narrative section of the plan.

A plan for evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan in terms of the strategies and outcomes must be included in the plan.

4. Procedures to ensure public involvement in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the remedial plan.

The public must participate in the local evaluation of all remedial plans. Conditions for meeting this requirement must be submitted as part of the evaluation design. Suggestions are contained in The Guidelines for the Evaluation and Classification of Schools and Districts, Chapter VI.

5. An implementation timeline and schedule

Plans should be designed to achieve objectives as quickly as the available resources permit. Some objectives (i.e., basic skills improvement or facility replacement) may require multi-year plans. In such cases, the initial plan should cover the remainder of the 1980-81 school year and all the next year, 1981-82. Subsequent plans will be required for the projected time period.

Basic Skills Remedial Plans

Those districts/schools which use Option A under number two above should use the column on the CBSR report forms to list dates for completing the major recommendations. Those districts using Option B must develop and submit an implementation timeline and schedule for listed activities.

Other Remedial Plans

The remedial plan must include an implementation timeline and schedule.

6. Specifics about the fiscal and staff resources to be used to implement the plan.

Each remedial plan must include a description of the fiscal and staff resources to be used to implement the plan. In addition, a list of planned major expenditures must be included in the plan and included in the district's improvement budget (Form MIS#05D010) submitted as part of the regular budget process.

D. Transmittal of Remedial Plans

The transmittal forms must be signed and attached to the plans prior to submission to the County Office. Plans must be submitted to the County Superintendent's office no later than January 16, 1980.

E. Process of State Approval

Remedial plans will be submitted to the county superintendent. After review, and consultation with the district if revisions are needed, the county superintendent will submit plans, with recommendations, to the Office of the Deputy Commissioner where the plans and recommendations will be reviewed and forwarded to the Commissioner for approval or disapproval.

F. Review Criteria

The Department of Education will use the general criteria defined below to review all plans. The criteria are not weighted and each plan must satisfy each criterion to be approved.

1. Is the analysis of the need comprehensive?

The needs analysis should include an analysis of all relevant areas. For example, services provided to students, the efficiency and effectiveness of school management and the adequacy of resources, as well as student skill deficiency should be addressed. The CBSR provides this type of needs assessment for schools with basic skills deficiencies.

2. Is the description of the improvement strategies and their justification supported by a workable, cohesive plan of action?

The plan must define priorities and provide for a logical sequence of action. The actions to be taken should support a clear strategy as opposed to random, ad hoc events that produce no aggregate impact. The reasons for selecting the strategy must be spelled out. For example, has it been tried before in another school in the district? Has it been used elsewhere with success? Are there reasons to believe it will work regardless of the fact it has never been tried?

3. Are the interim goals and benchmarks clearly written as outcomes?

There may be several outcomes -- some immediate, some long-range, some affect-staff, some affecting students. It should be possible to state these outcomes clearly and to identify their relation to the needs identified in the plan. Outcomes should be stated in measurable terms (e.g., test results, children served, reduction in absenteeism, etc.).

4. Do procedures include public participation in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the remedial plan?

Procedures to ensure public involvement in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the remedial plan must be included. Evidence of collaboration of those affected by the plan in the development of the plan is a positive factor. Involvement of teachers, parents and students in the development and evaluation of the plan strengthens commitment and increases its likelihood of success. Since all improvement requires change in human behavior, incentives for such change are important. Participation is sometimes a powerful incentive.

5. Are the timelines and schedule for implementation reasonable?

The plan must describe how the district will achieve the desired outcomes. Timelines must be realistic but not unduly "stretched out." If the deficiency will not be corrected within eighteen months then the overall schedule for correcting the deficiency must be reasonable.

6. Are the fiscal and human resources in the plan adequate?

The human and fiscal resources must match the activities to be undertaken. Plans backed with local resources are more likely to succeed than those dependent upon external funding. The capacity of staff must be weighed and staff development activities provided for, as needed. If external consultants are to be used, consideration should be given to their entry into the system and the adequacy of the follow-up activities.

K. Other Considerations

The following items are additional consideration for a good plan:

1. Practicality

The plan should address concrete issues and be designed to show results in a reasonable span of time. This is essential to maintain commitment and build morale.

2. Building on Strengths

If the district has a successful program in some schools, it makes sense to expand it to other school sites. Successful programs in other

districts may be adapted or adopted to meet local needs. If a school is successful in some areas but not in others, it may be wise to expand the successful activities to include the areas of need.

3. Commitment

Finally and most important, the local board, administration, teachers, parents and community must come together to ensure the implementation and success of the plan. Evidence of commitment may be found in the budget, in the time given to the effort by board members or parents, or in the participation of administrative leadership in the development of the plan, subsequent training activities and evaluation. Do the principals attend the staff workshops? Is a responsible person assigned to oversee the implementation of the plan? Commitment is intangible and hard to assess, but absolutely essential to the success of the improvement effort.

Directions for Completing Letters of Transmittal and
Assurances for Improvement Plans

- Information:** The district/school/program information request format on the letters is self explanatory.
- Objectives:** The objective(s) stated in the Letter of Transmittal and Assurances must relate to an outcome. In the basic skills the objective(s) should state the anticipated percent of pupils expected to achieve above standard. In other programs, the product (outcome) of the activities described in the improvement plan should be briefly, but clearly, stated.
- Plans:** Regardless of program, it behooves the local administration to establish with the county superintendent the dimensions or parameters of an improvement prior to the development of the plan. In basic skills, the dimensions of the plan will be ~~initially~~ spelled out by the Comprehensive Review Team. The local administration with the approval of the county superintendent may save substantial time and energy by accepting and implementing the findings cited by the Team. (Refer below to Option A) Or, the local administration may elect to review the findings of the team and develop a detailed plan of its own. (Refer below to Option B) Check the option used in the plan.
- In other programs, the plan must be submitted in accordance with plan elements requested by the county superintendent. Check appropriate elements.
- Assurances:** All improvement plans must be assured of local support through the provision of resources and public review and acceptance. The funds for the improvement plans should be documented as part of the regular district budget (improvement plans sections) submitted to the county superintendent. The plan should be reviewed publicly prior to implementation and the community should assist in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the program.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
225 WEST STATE STREET
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625

MIS 12E002

BASIC SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL AND ASSURANCES

TO: _____ District _____
(COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT) _____
_____ School _____
_____ Principal _____
(COUNTY) _____

Program Area: _____ Communication _____ Computation _____

The Board of Education of _____ School

District at its meeting on (date) _____ approved the enclosed Basic Skills Improvement Plan for the above school. The school's interim objective(s) for the 1980-81 school year are as follows:

Communication - _____

Computation - _____

Basic Skills Improvement Plan

The Board of Education has elected to submit the Basic Skills Improvement Plan in accordance with:

(CHECK ONE)

- ☐ Option A: The Board of Education accepts the findings of the Comprehensive Review team and will implement the priorities and recommendations of the teams report according to the timelines provided in the enclosed plan, or
- ☐ Option B: The Board of Education has reviewed the priorities and findings of the Comprehensive Review team and submits the enclosed plan in response to the findings of the team. The plan addresses the total basic skills program of the district/school and provides a detailed response to each of the priorities and recommendations cited under the five major areas that constitute the scope of team's evaluation. The plan includes activities and a timeline for implementation.

Assurances

- ☐ Adequate materials, equipment, facilities, time and staff will be provided to implement the Basic Skills Improvement Plan in this school as documented by a fiscal review of the plan.
- ☐ Procedures to ensure public involvement in the evaluation of the plan are incorporated in the plan.

Signed: _____
(BOARD SECRETARY/BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR)

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(CHIEF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR)

Date: _____

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
225 WEST STATE STREET
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL AND ASSURANCES

TO: _____ District _____
(COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT) _____
_____ School _____
_____ Program _____
(COUNTY) _____

The Board of Education of _____ School District
at its meeting on (date) _____ approved the enclosed Improvement Plan for the above program.
The target date for the completion of this Improvement Plan is _____ . The major objective of this
Improvement Plan is _____
Month Year

The person responsible for managing the implementation of the Improvement Plan is _____

Improvement Plan

The Improvement Plan submitted by the Board of Education contains the following elements as requested by the county superintendent: (Check those that apply).

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ a statement of the problem | ☐ interim goals and benchmarks to assess progress |
| ☐ an analysis of the problem and its cause(s) | ☐ a procedure for evaluating the success of the plan |
| ☐ a description and justification of the strategies to be used | ☐ an implementation timeline |
| | ☐ a description of staff responsibilities |

Assurances

- ☐ Adequate materials, equipment, facilities, time and staff are provided to implement the Improvement Plan in this program as documented by a fiscal review of the plan.
- ☐ Procedures to ensure public involvement in the evaluation of the plan are incorporated in the Improvement Plan.

Signed: _____
(BOARD SECRETARY/BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR)

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(CHIEF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR)

Date: _____